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CYNTHIA CLAPP-WINCEK

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INTERVIEW

Q: This is a very great opportunity for me because I have the pleasure of interviewing a distinguished member of the development community Cynthia Clapp-Wincek. And she is here with me today, it is Friday, December 2. And we're going to do this oral history and see where it takes us. So, Cindy, welcome. And I'm delighted that you were willing to do this. It will be a great addition to the ADST [Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training] collection of AID [United States Agency for International Development] related oral histories.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Thank you Alex, as I said, I really was honored when you asked.

Childhood, Education, and Early Background

Q: Oh, no, not at all. It's our honor. Let's get started at the beginning. And as I've said on earlier occasions that it is kind of important for us to know what your background is and how you got into the kind of work that you were doing to the extent that your childhood has any influence on it, but where you were born and what your parents did and what you

did leading up to going to your undergraduate work, which I see was at the University of Minnesota. But take us a little bit back and lead us forward to that time. Where were you born, in fact?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I was born in Evanston, Illinois. My dad worked for 3M Company [Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company]. And we lived in a suburb of Chicago. We used to get to go down and see the Museum of Science and Industry.

Q: That's a long trip from Evanston down to the south side, which is where I used to live.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Actually, we lived in Park Ridge. They lived in DesPlaines. And then one place in Park Ridge, then a second place in Park Ridge, which I vaguely remember. We left when I was twelve. I think the only thing relevant about that in terms of career is when I was an early grade schooler, I wanted to be a judge. And then when I got old enough to find out you had to be a lawyer, I changed my mind. But I do think of it from time to time because the definitions of evaluation include judgment in them. Apparently, I always had this desire to make judgments.

Q: Even when you say even ten or eleven, you were already thinking that way?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Actually, I think it was second grade. I was about seven or eight. I mean, people would say what do you want to be when you grow up? And for some reason, I would say I wanted to be a judge. And then when I got to be ten, I found out that you had to be a lawyer. And I was like, oh, no, I don't want to be a lawyer.

Q: Why did you resist the idea of a lawyer at that early stage in life?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I don't remember that well. But, one of my very good friends from growing up did become a judge and obviously was a lawyer. This is a good friend from Minnesota. When they were asking the kids in her daughter's class what their parents did. She said, “my mother argues for a living”, which is actually very accurate. It wasn't the arguing I wanted; it was the making judgments I wanted. I don't know that I was that explicit about it when I was younger but thinking back I do wonder. So when I was twelve, my dad got promoted at 3M. We moved to Minnesota because the headquarters of 3M is in St. Paul.

Q: Yes. When you moved there, did you go to school in St. Paul or where did you go?

CLAPP-WINCEK: They talked about moving to Edina which is a suburb of Minneapolis all the way across town from where my dad worked. As he said he always drove into the sun in both directions in the morning and in the evening. But they chose Edina specifically because of the school system. It was quite a strong school system.

Q: Well and it still is. We have a son who is a lawyer just like all of our sons. No judges yet. Take after their mother who was also a lawyer. But he moved to Minneapolis. He and

his wife and their two little boys moved to Minneapolis. And they live just inside the Minneapolis line, adjoining Edina-

CLAPP-WINCEK: In Southwest?

Q: And yeah, he works for United Health now, so it's all kind of out in that direction. Anyway, Edina is very nice. And so you went to school in Edina and your father drove you.

CLAPP-WINCEK: No, he was driving into the sun to get to the 3M headquarters on the other side of St. Paul. That was his commute. No, Edina had school buses. When I was in Chicago, we could walk to school because the school was about a block away. In Edina, it was the first time I took a school bus.

Q: Very exciting, right?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yeah, a little intimidating that first day with my little sister. My brother was in middle school. He was on a different bus. I was the big sister taking my little sister onto the school bus.
And they do have good schools. I took four years of Latin, which I've always been grateful for. Not every school system does those dead languages. But Latin is such an amazing base for understanding other Romance languages and so many Latin phrases have come into the English language. Oh, and I have to tell you one funny story. When I was in high school, I didn't take AP [Advanced Placement] American history because I didn't want to take American history. Well, turns out that was a mistake, because frankly, all the studious kids were in AP American history, and the not studious kids were in world history. But what I wanted was world history. And we're doing world history and the teacher is talking about the "Defenestration of Prague" which kicked off the Thirty Years War. And I started to laugh. As you can imagine, I was one of his more solid students, dutiful and did every speck of homework. And I'm laughing in his class. And he asked, what's so funny? And I said, Well, defenestration sounds so fancy, but what it means is "out the window". Because he spoke German, he didn't know that. Just those ways that having that Latin background were kind of those phrases and words and stuff that you understand in a way that somebody who studied German and was the teacher did not.

Q: You didn't make yourself an annoying student by bringing up these Latin phrases all the time to correct the teachers, right?

CLAPP-WINCEK: That was the only time and it was because it struck me as funny. I started to laugh. This will shock you. I was actually quite quiet. I found more of my voice later on. When I was in school, I took all the notes and copied over the notes. And I was doing all the stuff you were supposed to do.

Q: You were very meticulous and very careful. And that I think is a factor in your later life. You mentioned your siblings? How many siblings did you have growing up?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I have an older brother, and I have a younger sister.

Q: Okay, when you finish high school you've been well educated in Latin and world history and other such matters. And did you take any other foreign languages or just Latin?

CLAPP-WINCEK: At that point, I did not. I didn't take French until I got to college. The last year of Latin, they did a little bit of Italian. I don't know why. I had done a little bit of Italian. But I took French in college.

Q: Well, I suppose that they figured that you needed the cultural links between Italy and Rome and the Latin.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Somebody must have thought that they needed to bring it into the modern era. I don't know.

Q: Have you managed to use it? I mean, you were talking about how wonderful Latin is, as a source base of so many words and so many phrases and so on. Have you continued to know Latin and take advantage of it? It's not one of those things that you forget.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Words and phrases, so I'll see something and basically be able to decode the words, not always. I mean, that was a long time ago. I think the biggest help is when I started to take French, Latin helped with the cases and the declensions. I had that basis from Latin. That was an easy translation for me. I didn't actually get the spoken French particularly well. You had language labs and all that stuff. But it was when I spent the summer working for 3M in Paris between my junior and senior years in college that I really was able to absorb the language and absorb the accent. So that would be '74.

Q: Oh, that's terrific.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yeah, but I didn't do a good job of keeping my French up, I can still do a bang-up job as a tourist. I never used it for work. But I worked with people like Patricia Rader and Emmy Simmons who were completely fluent in French. I never really got into the work French because by then I had little kids.

Q: You weren't invited to the first of Biden's formal diplomatic dinners, when Macron was here to use your French?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Thank gosh.

Q: Why did you go to the University of Minnesota other than that it was close by?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Money. My brother was two years ahead of me at school and my sister was two years behind me. I was always in school while one of my siblings was in school. It was presented to me well past any financial aid deadlines that there wasn't

money. At that point, there wasn't a lot I could do about it as an undergrad. As a high schooler, I hadn't understood that that was something I would have needed to do. And so that's how I ended up at the U [University of Minnesota]. It's still a sore point. In the Twin Cities, they call the university "the U" as if there are no other universities.

Q: I'll have to check on that. But my daughter in law went to the U. I'll check on that with her and see, I can't quite remember whether she's done that. But I see.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Is it still current? Or if now that there are other universities in Minnesota, they start to differentiate, but it was definitely the U when I was there.
I went into the Honors Program at the U. You can get an excellent education in a university that's that big. I had my first lessons in seeking out what I needed and dealing with bureaucracy. This was not quite like the high school that I went to. My high school had about 3,600 kids; there were eight hundred and twelve kids that graduated with me. It was a big high school. It's not like I'd gone from a tiny high school. That is what my older daughter did. She went from a graduating class of twelve to Boston College. And loved it, by the way. She did the transition swimmingly. I went from a big high school into a bigger university. And you have to declare a major right when you're a junior. And so my favorite courses were political science and French. That's why I declared international relations as my major.
In your senior year, you have to take a senior seminar. I looked at the senior seminar for fall of my senior year. And it was on aid giving and was taught by Richard Blue. I think it was Professor Brown who was the other guy. There were two professors. We did lectures the first half of the quarter because they were in the quarter system. And then in the second half of the quarter, we had a simulation of aid giving to Nepal. I was the aid representative from the Government of India. The Government of India gave aid to Nepal. Richard had been doing work with USAID. He checked all these documents out of the library. So we had accurate access to the documents, and we had to come up with project proposals and stuff. It was hilarious. One guy was the prince of Nepal and they killed him off in a plane crash. He was really upset.

Q: Wait a minute, there was a prince of Nepal in your class?

CLAPP-WINCEK: No, designated.

Q: I see, okay.

CLAPP-WINCEK: The way I was designated as the donor from India to Nepal. He was designated as part of the royal family. And they killed him.

Q: How many of you were in this class doing this aid related project?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Maybe eighteen to twenty? And of course, I'm competing with projects against the USAID donor and the DFID [United Kingdom Department for International Development] donor, although, I don't think they were called DFID in those days. But anyway, the British aid agency. I'm competing against them and presenting the

projects to the people who are designated as the ministry people for the Nepalese government. I mean, it was fascinating, and I got hooked.

Q: Did you have enough background where Richard and Mr. Brown or Professor Brown, able to convey to you enough about how this whole thing worked? It seems to me, for you to be generating the view of an Indian project developer kind of out of the blue. People work in aid for years before they even begin to understand how to do that.

CLAPP-WINCEK: My Indian view was certainly limited. My cultural understanding was very thin. But these were the days of Uma Lele who was making the case for ag [agriculture] based growth in the face of everybody else. We were reading stuff like Judith Tendler's Inside Foreign Aid. These two guys knew the aid business, Richard had been consulting in the aid business, and they knew the aid business. I think the other guy was a history professor. And they actually knew the business pretty well. And we were getting textbooks, by people in the industry, like Judith Tendler, who had been doing a lot of work. She was an IPA [Intergovernmental Personnel Act] with USAID and then left and wrote the book. And I did later meet her. She's such an interesting woman. And we couldn't get her in, in the year, when you were in PPC [Program and Policy Coordination]. She worked for us a little bit in the Study Division (of the Office of Evaluation) Basically she said, I can't afford to work for you guys anymore because the World Bank will pay me more and I won't have to travel as much. There was an interesting article from my public administration class in grad school that we read about bureaucracy. And one of the things the guy said, is if you're in the bureaucracy, and you want somebody to make a decision without them getting too into it because you're afraid if they get into the weeds, they won't agree with you. He's like, you get all the documentation, and you put them in a shopping cart, and you wheel it into their office on a Friday afternoon, and you'll get what you want every time.

Q: Have you ever done that?

CLAPP-WINCEK: No, not quite. But have I pulled the Friday afternoon trick? Yes, I have.

Q: I think it's quite remarkable. Were you to have had that exposure even as an undergraduate to the aid business. I mean, I guess that's, I mean, having Richard Blue. I don't know how many Richard Blues there were and other universities who approached these subjects as well. I mean, it must be quite unique.

CLAPP-WINCEK: He said there were two kids out of that seminar that went into international development. He stayed in touch with another one who has stayed in the aid business. I forgot what he does.

Q: I mean, when you think about the number of universities that do have development programs, and so on, but this is much more of a hands-on kind of thing. And he used documents from AID and other agencies.

CLAPP-WINCEK: And then, I got my fellowship at GW [George Washington University], which is why I went to GW because I got a full scholarship and a partial living allowance. And as I say, I never got the hang of living partially, so I always had a job as well. At GW, there wasn't anybody there when I started, who did development. And that's why I was taking public administration classes. So there were international public administration classes, and I was taking Africa classes, and trying to put them together. Then when I needed thesis advisors, and my thesis was on the way ethnicity played into aid giving in Kenya. And because in my Africa classes, of course, we'd had a lot, and in political science classes, on how ethnicity played a role in the way governments were run in Africa. And I ended up doing a map and overlaying the aid projects because they would tell you the towns in the documentation I could find. And I overlaid that. And they were all in the Kikuyo area. There were perhaps one or two in the Luo areas. And it was just sort of crystal clear to whom that aid was being directed. And so that was my master's thesis. But it got better.

Eventually GW found a thesis advisor who was a woman, a Latin Americanist that did know something about foreign aid. They added her to my committee late, although, I will say it was a much, much better paper for her insights. And I appreciated them finally finding somebody who could give me that kind of guidance. And she is the one who helped me focus on ethnicity. I had talked about it a little bit. And she basically came back and said, this is the paper. And I had to rewrite it, which means that I didn't graduate when I thought I was graduating. I graduated six months later, but that's okay. I was working part time.

Q: What were you working at?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I worked for the National Health Lawyers Association. When I was at the University of Minnesota, I worked in the library for the bibliographer for French and Italian because I knew enough French that I could look up the books and stuff. And that was a fun job because basically, my job was when a professor would request something, you'd have to go and search and see if it was in the collection. And they had stuff that was a hundred years old. It's a land grant university. It's not that old compared to a lot of universities on the east coast. But I'd find stuff that was badly cataloged, and I'd be bringing it back.

Q: But when you went to Washington—

CLAPP-WINCEK: First I worked for the library at the Department of Interior library. That was my first job in Washington, in the library at the Department of the Interior but that was incredibly boring because I worked in the Serials Library. And when people retired, they would send down all their stacks of periodicals. And you'd have to go through the catalog, which was of course physical. It was flippy. It wasn't cards, it was flippy things because you had to pull them out and add stuff to them, and this was before OCLC [Online Computer Library of Congress].

Q: OCLC?

CLAPP-WINCEK: It's the online computer system of the Library of Congress. When they moved past the Dewey Decimal System, the numbers that they moved to were the Library of Congress in the OCLC system, and that was just being introduced while I was there. My job was to sit there for hour after hour and go through these stacks of periodicals sitting in a chair, boring as sin.

Q: Yeah, sounds like it.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I was GS-2, the only other GS-2 I was told were the second year ushers at Wolf Trap.

Q: But you were not a GS-1?

CLAPP-WINCEK: No. They told me that the only GS-1s that anybody knew about were the first year ushers Wolf Trap.

Q: I have to tell you, I was a GS-1.

CLAPP-WINCEK: No, where?

Q: I was a GS one in between the summer jobs that I had while I was still in college, and I worked for the blood bank, at the Clinical Center at National Institute of Health. And I was in charge of washing test tubes in the blood bank but also driving to Baltimore to pick up the blood that had been purchased there, that kind of thing. I'm the only GS-1 I've ever met. So meaning a GS-2 is kind of nothing. Anyway, back to University of Minnesota for a minute, did you have to write a paper about your experience as the Indian Aid giver or was that all kind of hands-on stuff? Did you have to write a paper to describe all this for Richard Blue or somebody?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I don't remember. If I did, it would have been an easy paper. Because it would have just been one of those things that you knock out. I don't remember. What I remember being harder was writing my project proposal to present to the Nepalese government representatives, I remember that as being harder. And don't remember what my project was, I will say, based on the documentation we had available to us, it was obvious what the project should be. That's the only thing I remember, is, it's like this is clearly the best choice. And it turns out that I had a document checked out that somebody else wanted and needed so that they could cite it, but I had it.

Q: You didn't share it?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I have to admit, I think I maybe kind of didn't do that.

Q: If I may ask if you remember what the project was?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I don't remember.

Q: There was no opportunity for you in later life to take advantage of this early planning to have a deal with the Nepalese government and see whether you could work on this project.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I wasn't that deep into the project. I mean, I was aware that I was only this deep. I understood this system well enough to know that this was a four-week simulation. USAID had project papers in those days that were perhaps a hundred pages? What was mine? Probably five, maybe ten.

Q: If only they would go back to what you were doing that would have been a good model for project papers so that people could actually understand what's going on.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Although, I argue a wee bit with that, because of this work I've been doing with DOD [Department of Defense], which we will get into, and they're doing foreign assistance worth billions of dollars and basically with a ten-page slide deck. Where's the analysis? Where's the understanding of what the problem is that you're trying to address? I have to say, I have found that somewhat appalling. The new guidance that they got in 2017 tries to change that, but the system is just beginning to be able to start to change, but that's a separate issue.

Q: Yeah, we'll get back to that. So then, you're getting ready to graduate from University of Minnesota. And how did you decide that it was George Washington University? How did you—I mean, you heard that they had—

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yeah, I was applying for fellowships. And that one came through very quickly. And what it literally was was the Scottish Rite Fellowship. Scottish Rite created this fellowship program to be the Protestant balance to Georgetown's School of Foreign Service. Now, I didn't know that until I got there. My grandparents had both been very prominent in Scottish Rite outside Chicago. Sadly, their approach to religion turned my mother into an atheist. I really didn't know a lot about religion myself because I had been raised by an atheist. But my grandparents were very prominent in the Scottish Rite. And when I did the interview, they were very cute. I'd put it into the application. I'm sorry, when I went to do the interview, they were asking me about my background, and they were asking me questions, blabbity blah, as any of those interviews would go, and the guy draws a double line. And he says, Okay, that's the criteria on which we're going to decide. Then he said, by the way, could you tell me a little bit about your grandparents? I don't think that that turned out to be that much of a factor. When I got to DC and met my colleagues, I had a stronger academic record than the bulk of the kids in that program. I think the kids with the really strong academic records were likely to go into Georgetown and Princeton. But they paid, it worked. It got me to DC [District of Columbia]. It worked well. I think GW was and is very strong in some things. And I think they do a little bit of development these days

Q: Well, I mean, I'm not sure about that. I mean, there was a time that GW was involved in this Oral History Program. Now those were State Department people more than AID

people. The Elliott School has some and looks like their business school has good development people in it, too. But I think we're talking about thirty-forty years ago or so. I don't know enough about what the history looked like, at that time. I'm trying to think of consultants that we may have brought into AID. AU well, this is another subject for another day but as we've been looking at American University, and they have decided to take the AID, retirees, files, and we're working with them on an internship program and so on. The faculty today do not seem to be particularly interested in development, although quite a few former Peace Corps people are at AU and many of them do go into foreign affairs in one way or another. I guess I'm not a very good judge of that. You're a much better judge of that than I am.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I don't follow it that closely. You want to know how I follow it? Who invited me to give the monitoring and evaluation lecture in their semester.

Q: Well, that's as good a tangible source of judgment as anything else.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I've done all the schools in DC at least once, except for Catholic. And then George Mason came on later. I haven't been asked to do one of those for a while.

Q: Well, we'll have to stir that up a little bit so that you get some.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Ann Van Dusen went over to Georgetown. She and I started talking and then she left Georgetown. And so then, it was around that time that I did the monitoring and evaluation lecture in a conflict class at Georgetown, but that was a little bit different.

Q: I mean, Steve Radlett has not invited you to Georgetown to that development program?

CLAPP-WINCEK: He definitely has not. Steve Radlett probably has no idea who I am. I cannot imagine that our paths would have crossed.

Q: Really, despite the fact that he was chief economist at AID. Anyway, that's different. We'll have to find a way to make sure your paths cross. There you are, and you're at GW and your thesis gets delayed a little bit. What was the exact topic, it was in Kenya?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Ethnicity. It had to do with ethnicity and AID giving to Kenya.

Q: Okay, and it sounds like you did this masterful work of overlaying and all that sort of thing. That sounds like a technical masterpiece, in addition to whatever substantively, you were saying. While you were there, and you delayed it for six months, but you were still at that point, employed by the Interior Department, right?

CLAPP-WINCEK: No, I shifted, because I got so bored. And one of the lovely librarians there. Her husband did a lot of work with the National Health Lawyers Association. And she said, they are looking for somebody to work in the office. And so that's when I

shifted over. I think I lasted about a year at the Interior Department. I can't remember. And then I went to the National Health Lawyers Association to help out with the accounting. I didn't even put that on my resume. I've got enough years that I leave out the ancient history

Q: Clearly, we know from what you said earlier, you were embarrassed by the idea that you might be associated with a lawyer at some stage or another.

CLAPP-WINCEK: However, what happened, there I met my husband. Now my ex-husband. He worked on Capitol Hill for the House Ways and Means oversight subcommittee, and was working on tax law. He was a tax attorney. But he was focusing on the employee benefits work. He was a specialist in employee benefits. It's not that I'm embarrassed to be associated with lawyers. I just didn't ever want to be one. And I must say, I did watch him and think yep, I was right. I didn't want to do that.

Q: Well, tax law is not maybe the most exciting form of the law.

CLAPP-WINCEK: He loves it to this day. It just suited him. For him it was about how many factors you could hold in your head at any given time. He's really good at math, because it's all the actuarial tables and stuff. It was him to a tee.

Q: Okay. That's great. I mean, we need people like that.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yes, exactly. Exactly. Anyway, I worked for the National Health Lawyers Association in grad school. But of course, now I need a job. So now I'm seriously trying to get Richard Blue on the telephone. I knew Richard Blue was at USAID. And I am now trying to track him down, which I finally did.

Q: And this was February of 1977.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I think I finally tracked him down more like late spring of '77. And then went in to meet with him. His deputy was John Westley. That was the mid-career retraining program called the Development Studies Program. Do you remember that, bringing the staff in for three months? The name of that training program will probably come to me. They hired me on two contracts. And in the course of doing one of the contracts. I was interviewing—he was later at Claremont.

And he said, there's a job in the newly created evaluation office. And I will say, that was one of the instances this happened to me, particularly when I looked so young. When I was doing that work just out of graduate school. So I was twenty-three, twenty-four. People kept thinking I was a high school student. I mean, I looked so young, which was really irritating in that era. And so he hadn't read the background that I had sent him. He sat there. And he started looking at it. While I was there interviewing, I watched his face change, and I have had that experience a number of times, because I had a Minnesota accent. I looked way younger than I was. And people were sort of like, Oh, who is this

person? And then they look at the work. And that's when he decided to tell me that there was a job in the studies division that I could apply for.

Q: Well, so you've lost the Minnesota accent, but you still look young.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Now, this looking younger thing is working for me. I mean, I turned seventy in a week. And I'm okay. It was tough for a lot of years. And so I would have that from time to time, where somebody would be like, oh, oh, good. She seems to know what she's talking about.

USAID/Office of Evaluation, 1979 - 1984, and Office of Health (1985)

I applied for a job with Bob Berg. I got the job. So at this point, I keep wanting to say if debt, it's like if debt, but it's not if debt, that's the World Bank's training program. I'm working for Richard but directly for John Westley, who's such a delightful person. I'm working for them on these two small contracts, and I'm applying for this job. And I got an interview with Bob Berg and I got the job. Then I go back to Richard where I am working on contract and I said, "I got a job in the evaluation office". And Richard says, "Guess who your next boss is going to be?" I got there in February of 1979.

Q: Before that, you were doing the consultancies?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I did those two contracts. I did two contracts. So in spring of '79, February of '79. I started in the Studies Division in this office of evaluation. And Richard came in, I think, in June, a couple months later,

Q: What did those first two contracts do for you in terms of I mean, were these educational? Or did you feel that this was something you'd already known, or, I mean, I'm just wondering how these two initial tasks might have been helpful or not helpful to you as life went on.

CLAPP-WINCEK: It was certainly useful to have had that experience of getting a contract. Within the components of the contract, I was going to interview people that I remember the task of one of them, I can't say that I remember the task of the other. I was asked to create a case study for teaching integrated rural development programs, which were becoming quite prominent at that time. And there was a debate, was it better to do it concentrated in a village, originally in a small village? Or was it better to do different approaches, build up ministries, build capacity, as opposed to building capacity within a village. And so that was the first contract. And it was supposed to be taught as a case study. When I presented it to the folks in the training program, nobody had done the homework. I'm trying to lead a case study when nobody's read what they were supposed to have read. I will say, and I was very quiet in those days, I did get them into a conversation about integrated rural development programs. I had steeped myself in this and I was fairly knowledgeable at that point.

And then interestingly, the Studies Division did one of those series of impact evaluations on integrated rural development. This was those olden days when it was such a different definition of impact evaluation, I no longer refer to those I mean, when I talked about that series, I will say impact evaluation, because that was their formal name, but when I describe it to people now, I say evaluations of impact because the methods are so different. Sadly, they hijacked the term for RCTs, randomized controlled trials and high quality quasi experimental design. How many times has that phrase rolled off my tongue? And you can do an impact evaluation and not look at the impact variable. That's what makes me so cranky. MCC[Millenium Challenge Corporation] is actually good. They do impact evaluations on their impact variable, so I give them credit for that. But half the rest of the world is doing impact evaluations and it's not evaluating impact which is why the USAID policy talks about higher order outcomes and stopped using the word impact. The word impact had been so muddied by this impact evaluation sweeping the development field. But I digress, of course.
But so back to one of the studies division series, and at this point, I was working with David Steinberg, another one of my dear mentors, and we did a series of impact evaluations on integrated rural development, and I came into it knowing some from having done that work. So that was very helpful. And then we set up the impact evaluations, but we can get into that.

Q: When you joined the evaluation office, had you thought that evaluation was going to be the theme of your life at that stage? I mean, where did this attention to evaluation come from as you're just starting your career?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I knew a bit about monitoring and evaluation from our aid giving seminar at the U, because one of the things we had to do in our proposals was say what evaluations would be needed. I understood the system of midterm and final evaluations. I don't know that I was aware at that point, how weak the monitoring systems were. Basically, in those days, USAID was monitoring by sending a team out midterm calling it an evaluation, but there was no data and then sending them out at the end and trying to cobble together some judgments. But I knew a little bit about it, but it was because I was in that office. So when I went in in February, I'm trying to think of what I did for Bob Berg between February, Richard came in about June, and it was either July or August, that Doug Bennett, the USAID Administrator, called down to the Studies Division and Bob Berg happened to be away. Richard Blue is the one who goes up to meet with the administrator, as I recall it, and gets told, “I don't really know the impact of the programs in the agency that I'm in charge of. That's what I want you to do. I want you to evaluate the impact of our programs.” There must have been five professors in that office. Richard, David, Graham Kerr, Barbara Pillsbury, Dan Dworkin was a PhD and had taught at Clark. And I'm trying to remember who else. I would sit in the meetings. And listen to these guys discuss how they're going to set up this evaluation series. Now, there's a graduate education for you. I mean, I say to people, I learned evaluation on the job. Now there are all kinds of courses and stuff you can take. But in the olden days, they had evaluation in the education departments at universities.

But to sit in and listen to these people argue and the pros and the cons. And Peter Delp was there, he'd written a paper on methods which I still have on my shelf, this fascinating group of people. Should evaluation be internal or should it be external? That formed my opinion of whether evaluations should be internal or external. And the decision that they made, I still think is the right one. And I'm about to do an evaluation for USAID based on this principle, which was that if you want the findings used,(Richard was coming out of all this career retraining as well. Keeping that in mind) you need to use direct hire staff. You need to have statements of bias and conflict of interest. You use direct hire staff, not from the bureau in which the project they're evaluating situates. They have to come from at least another bureau. And there would be one consultant on every team who was an expert in the country, usually an anthropologist, sometimes a political scientist, like John Harbison, who was a political scientist and did Liberia roads. It was most often the anthropologist or the political scientist who was an expert in the country that we hired from the outside. I have to say my day job became running a travel agency. I was the one who was calling all the people in the agency and recruiting team members. I mean, David Steinberg wasn't going to call those people and recruit them. He'd be like the team leader. He talked to the la di da people and I had to find people to get on our teams. And it was hilarious. Everybody wanted to go to Nepal. I had a woman who was an expert in Burkina Faso but of course it was Upper Volta in those days. And she was a USAID Foreign Service Officer. And I was dying to get her on to the team. The name changed by the way, while the team was there, they went to Upper Volta, and they came home from Burkina Faso, which I always remember.

Q: Good timing, good timing.

CLAPP-WINCEK: She didn't want to go there. She wanted to go to Nepal. And I knew that there was going to be a different kind of evaluation in Nepal. I said, Okay, you find me another expert in Upper Volta, and I will get you on the Nepal team.

Q: You were very powerful.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Well, in a way, in a way.

Q: It was this, just parenthetically here. Was this part of Doug Bennett's desire to have not these year long studies, but a month long evaluation, and one that he could then review and that could go to the Congress and that kind of thing. I mean, that this was—

CLAPP-WINCEK: This was that.

Q: This was that.

CLAPP-WINCEK: The month was so they used the rapid appraisal method. Rapid Rural Appraisal was the guy from Britain, doesn't matter. But it was Rapid Rural Appraisal method in those days. So it was considered a method, it was considered an evaluation method and it had principles, and it had ways that you operate. And it could be done with about two and a half weeks in the field, two and a half weeks in the country. And they

had prescribed that you could spend so many days in the capitol than you had to be out in the field for two weeks. Come back, quick briefing, they did write the reports in countries. I guess they did stay for that third week to write the report in the country as I recall. I was on the Somalia irrigation team. The first series, I forgot that David was responsible, and I was his research assistant for irrigation. I went on roads for Bill Anderson, Bill Anderson was in charge of that series. And I got on one of the road evaluations. That was before David came in and started irrigation. So my second evaluation was irrigation in Somalia. I have been to Northern Somalia, while I work with my DOD counterparts are always extremely impressive. But I've been to Somalia. It wasn't quite so hairy in those days, although I could go on with stories forever about the team member who got kidnapped two weeks after we got back. She stayed but she's the one who spoke fluent Somali. They let her go after a couple hours. She was the anthropologist on that team.

Q: Who was that? What was her name?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Oh, boy.

Q: Well, nevermind. Just curious about that.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I know her Somali name, Amina Nur, but mysterious new that would not be the name that you know her.

Q: At the same time that these rapid evaluations were going on. There were also some of the more traditional evaluations going on, right or was this?

CLAPP-WINCEK: There were two offices in the office of evaluation. One was the Studies Division. And for the first like four years, close, most of what the studies division was doing was Bennett impact evaluations by these Rapid Rural Appraisal methods. Everything was rural in those days. There was also the Systems Division. I remember when Molly Hageboeck came in to run the Systems Division. Oh, that lovely man who went to the UN was there before she was. He was the first person to teach me a log frame. I don't know if I can get his name out. He went up to be head of evaluation of one UN [United Nations] agency. I think it was UNDP [United Nations Development Programme]. But I couldn't swear to that. And then Molly came in. And so the Systems Division was writing guidance for the evaluations that everybody else did. And so they were writing guidance with which you could make choices about methods. Not all evaluations had to be done this particular, this was what had been chosen for and because we were supposed to look at sustainability. This was supposed to be of projects that had been completed five years before we went out and evaluated them. The irrigation evaluation that I did in northern Somalia was twenty-five years old. And so the other thing I was doing was recalling retired files all the time. The guy in the basement who was responsible for that: I was his favorite person because all he did was get boxes and send them to Suitland, which I picture like that scene from the Raiders of the Lost Ark, you know that scene with that warehouse that goes on for miles. That's how I pictured

Suitland, Maryland, where they retired all the files. But I was getting him to bring files back and using them.

Q: And you already had a lot of experience in that, didn't you? What you had been doing in Minnesota was, old files are kind of your specialty?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I had understood the value of having the primary documents, and I was good friends with the ladies in the USAID library. Remember, the library used to be right inside the 21st Street entrance of the State Department building. Before they created CDIE [Center for Development Information and Evaluation], I was good buds with those people because I inherently liked librarians. And I was always going down there to get stuff. And they were helping me get stuff but the retired files were this different system. You'd be trawling through these retired files. It was fun.

Q: I'm trying to remember what existed before that evaluation office was established. You know the history of that. And I should remember, I was head of PPC at that time, but what was there when you joined Bob Berg and Richard and others in that office?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Allen Turner was in the incipient evaluation office.

Q: He was an anthropologist.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Allen Turner is an anthropologist, that's part of what's confusing. Younger Allen, and he was like at ___ or someplace, anyway. There had been an earlier office that was just shutting down. I only was over there one time, I got sent on an errand by Bob. It was a small office that reported directly to the previous administrator, this was before Doug Bennett.

Q: Jack Gilligan.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Apparently, according to Bob Berg had said they weren't doing anything for him. He was shutting down that office and created the new evaluation office, right. Years ago, I would have remembered the name of that office. It was more in the realm of an IG [Inspector General] . It wasn't quite IG-ish. But I was probably picking up documents from them or something. But I do remember my impression being, they're not looking enough at the impact of these programs. Do you see, this was even before Bennett asked for the impact evaluations, but I've been based in the Richard Blue's school of development. And you needed to know. And remember it was the people-level impact days: what was the effect on people's lives? All of that had come into the agency even before Bennett got there. So it must have been Gilligan. And I was well aware of this people level impact stuff. And I remember looking at these guys going. Oh, you don't seem to have gotten that this is where things are, this is what is deemed important that they've been doing other things that were arguably important, but they weren't doing that and it led to their demise. I just knew this much about it, but that's my memory.

Q: I'm terrible because I should know this history very well, but it has completely disappeared from.

CLAPP-WINCEK: They weren't under you. They were reporting directly to the administrator and he's like, I don't want another one of these offices reporting to me and he put the new evaluation office in PPC.

Q: I see. But I should know what was going on in evaluation elsewhere. But anyway, okay, how large was this part of the evaluation office that was doing the rapid evaluation?

CLAPP-WINCEK: The Bennett impacted evaluation?

Q: Yeah, right. How many were you in that office?

CLAPP-WINCEK: When I went in, it was brand new. Bob Berg hadn't even been there that long. And I don't know, including Bob, there might have been four or five people. I mean, I was one of the early people in that office.

Q: This is not including these various scholars that you were describing.

CLAPP-WINCEK: They all came later. Richard, well and Bob, Bob would have started it because he already had Allen? Although Allen chose to go back. I think Allen was pissed that he didn't get Bob's job, but I don't know that. But he went back to his university. He'd already been on an IPA. And because Bennett wanted this, he was making sure that they got IPAs, so that they got like, five more IPAs. With that summer Bill Anderson came down from the Hill [The Capitol Hill] and took a job in that office. So I tend to think of the Studies Division when it was really early-ish. But when it was really up and running, because I was not the only research assistant. I mean, each one of these guys had a research assistant. And so it had to be fifteen, twenty people in the Studies Division. The systems division only had three or four people, including NinaVreeland.

Q: Well, I remember the name. I don't remember the person. This is terrible.

CLAPP-WINCEK: She's the one who wrote the first evaluation policy of that era. She wrote 1983, the 1983 evaluation policy.

Q: See, I was gone by that time.

CLAPP-WINCEK: That's right. You had moved on. And that may be why you don't remember her. She may have come after you left. Yes, she was not there in the very, very early days.

Q: And Molly didn't write that.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Molly wrote the next version. Or didn't, no, maybe, some of them read it because I do remember. No, it was later, Molly wrote a later version, because by then I had left USAID and I was doing some work with MSI [Management Systems International]. And I remember going to Molly's house and saying, okay, Molly, I can edit and finish this chapter because MSI had the contract at that point. The first version, I think, was written by Nina Vreeland in '83 or '84. But now we're into the early 90s. And I said, Molly, I can't write this section, finish this section. I'll fix this. Larry Cooley has always been very grateful to me for doing that. Molly Hageboeck never met a deadline she couldn't miss by six months. USAID is calling up and yelling at Larry Cooley. And I love Molly. I would say my three mentors were Richard Blue, David Steinberg, Molly Hageboeck and to a degree Bob Berg.

Q: Tell me about that Somalia evaluation. I mean, it was a project that had been completed twenty-five years before?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yeah it was fascinating.

Q: Did you find evidence of it?

CLAPP-WINCEK: We found evidence of it. We had maps and records. We had an ag economist on the team who was great. He became the senior economist at I think it was Save the Children. Pretty sure it was Save the Children. So it was a bunding project.

Q: Bunding?

CLAPP-WINCEK: It's much less irrigation canals and turnouts, and all that stuff that people think of as normal irrigation. It was shaping hillsides with berms so that the water wouldn't just run down and run off. That's a bund; when you've shaped the hillside.

Q: What about the plantings?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I don't remember that part because we didn't see whatever that was. Twenty-five years later, we walked those bunds. You could still walk the bunds.

Q: And they worked?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yeah. I mean, and the guys who own the fields, were doing enough maintenance to keep the berms up to keep the water in. They weren't doing more bunds, which had been the expectation that this was a demonstration project but that had not occurred. But the ag economist worked out twenty-five years of increased yields, and it looked really good. They had done enough area that it looked really good. That was very interesting, but the other thing that we did find, and I have always said that, this horn of Africa, these nomadic cultures, you don't get the paperwork you want, but you get the memories. You have the long memories, right. And so there were two places where there were concrete turnouts. And we got taken because they had USAID plaques on them with the handshake.

Q: Oh, boy.

CLAPP-WINCEK: But those systems had not been kept up. The basic lesson was expecting local people to maintain those structures is not as realistic as you would like, you think if this is a benefit to them. It worked for a guy who owned a specific field. But it didn't work for a group of people who might have benefited from this turnout. There were also a lot of problems with salting. In that dry climate irrigation percolated up the salts and destroyed the fields. You had to be careful of that as well. Like classic irrigation, if you put on a lot of water, then you would have problems with salting.

Q: And these evaluations contain recommendations as to what the message was. What was learned from this that could be applied in future? Were those evaluations filled with that? Did they provide any of that kind of information?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Absolutely. And there were two versions of that, one version was the individual evaluation, each individual evaluation, and Doug Bennett, to his credit, debriefed every team for the first fifteen or twenty teams. One of the ways we got direct hire people to go on these evaluation teams was to tell them that they would get to go up to speak to the administrator, which is not an opportunity that quite so many people had. And so, there were recommendations, they briefed missions, obviously, they briefed bureaus, and then they got to brief the administrator.

The other version was, and I will give you the first which was Bill Anderson in the rural roads. They had a conference where they invited all of the road experts in USAID, and all of the team members. And they sat together and hammered out a policy determination. And that did go through you're the policy office in PPC. The policy determinations went from that office. So these groups of people who worked on the evaluations and the people from that policy office who were going to deal with getting the policy determination signed off, also came to the conference and heard that whole conversation. For the first couple policy determinations were written and the roads policy determination changed the way roads were designed for a number of years. I mean, I haven't tracked it through lately, but so that you had recommendations, both in every individual evaluation plus the set of recommendations that became a policy determination. And that was a pretty impressive use of evaluation findings.

Q: That is. Did you go with the teams up to the administrator's office for those discussions with him about the evaluations?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Only the two times that I was a team member. When I remember, I got to go for Kenya rural roads and Somalia irrigation.

Q: And what was your impression of the administrator?

CLAPP-WINCEK: He was a very thoughtful guy. I mean, he was asking questions. And on the Kenya rural roads one, one of the anecdotes that was written into it was one of the

ways you could tell that there was no traffic on these roads. The problem with these roads was that they were built in such a poor area that there weren't any vehicles. Satish Shah, an ag economist who worked in the mission, had put forward a proposal for an agricultural productivity project and a rural roads project. And the rural roads project got approved and the ag productivity project did not. He came on our field work (as someone who would use the findings). He came with us on a whole section of the field work because we believed in this internal external theme, and that man was one of the least biased people I ever met. And he kicked himself the whole time. Because he said, I knew I should have told them not to go forward with the roads project. But it was too soon without the productivity project. And he knew. But in its infinite wisdom, Washington went forward with a roads project, there wasn't enough increase in productivity, to have changed the system. I've got two more anecdotes. Then I'll get to the one about the administrator. We were on our way to a market in poor western Kenya, the roads having been built for markets, they were farm to market roads. And we're on our way to the market. We caught up to a bus and we saw the bus passing a woman who's got the bananas on her head walking to the market. So we stopped and talked to her. Why didn't she take the bus? She explained that the round trip bus fare cost exactly what she was going to sell the bananas for. So there was no point in taking the bus. That was the one telling anecdote. And the other telling anecdote is we came along the road. And there were two little girls who had built a termite trap in the middle of the road, because it was nice and clear for them. And of course, they ran away, and our driver got them to come back and talk to us. So John Roberts, the team leader brought one of the termites back for the administrator. There was much discussion of the desiccated termite. And he just got a big kick out of that. The irrigation one wasn't as memorable.

Q: The thing that I was so impressed with Doug's knowledge of some of these things, his experience in India, I think, had given him knowledge of how wells operate. And what happens if the water runs out, I mean, things that I have now forgotten completely, but he was not your average administrator, just asking these general questions. His questions were quite discriminating and precise, at least on the occasions that I joined some of those reviews, which is very impressive, I thought. And the other thing was this business about wanting to be sure that these were treated as very open and available reviews, and that we should send them to Congress and whether it had errors in it or not, and not errors. But if it indicated that we failed because it was important to let the Congress know that we were learning from experience.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I thought that kind of experience was recreated with the Development Fund for Africa [DFA]. In '87, I went to the Africa Bureau to be the monitoring and evaluation officer. While I was there, the Africa Bureau negotiated the DFA with Congress. Emmy Simmons was there and John Westley was the program office director. And in that DFA era, I saw that same kind of openness to Congress, although we were trying to scale up to not a series of impact evaluations, but more of an impact reporting. But that's a whole other that we will get into. Can I jump forward to one other anecdote?

Q: Of course.

CLAPP-WINCEK: One other time that I saw that Doug Bennett experience was Raj Shah. I used briefing the administrator as a prize for the best evaluations. So when I went back into USAID in 2011, I was charged with rebuilding the agency's capacity for evaluation. We ran a competition for the best evaluation reports. People submitted evaluation reports, my staff scored them, and we picked the best ones and those team members got to brief Raj. We get a call that the briefing is going to start about twenty minutes late. And it was because that man went through those evaluations enough that he could ask a thoughtful pointed question about every single one. Because the briefing had been rescheduled multiple times, I did not have the team from Botswana present. So Raj asked me the question about Botswana. Thank God! I'd read it well enough that I could answer the question. That was the one other time that I had visibility on an administrator who can connect with evaluations.

A few weeks later, one of his people said, "that was the best. We have to do this all the time." I told him that Raj's staff had rescheduled the briefing eight times over ten months. I said, if you can get me an assured date, I will get you a good briefing. But until you guarantee me a date, we're not doing that again. I spent hours and hours. Every time I was in a meeting with him, I would say with his people listening, and I was in a number of them because of the stuff that was going on. And I would say, and we need to schedule the meeting, and he would say, yes, yes, of course. And I'm thinking, are you people listening to him? God it was so frustrating. I'm sorry. Back to the Bennett impact evaluations. Richard changed jobs. David changed jobs. First, Richard created CDIE, we should talk about the creation of CDIE.

Q: Right, in terms of the timetable, this is 1979 first that you start working in this office. And a lot of this has been done during 1980.

CLAPP-WINCEK: '81.

Q: Well, Doug is no longer there in '82 after January, but okay, so bring-

CLAPP-WINCEK: Those evaluations limped along for a while. But without that pull from an administrator, it was never the same.

Q: Peter McPherson, I mean, was Peter McPherson interested in this that you could tell now or not?

CLAPP-WINCEK: The evaluation office got exiled to Rosslyn, which I always took as a clear indication of how important we were. If you're not important enough to stay in the main building. You're lower on the list. There were no briefings, he was not interested in it.

Q: Interesting. Anyway, there you are. What happens next?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I tried to finish up the impact evaluation series after David had left and after Richard had left. I will say writing that paper was unmanageable. For me, I did several drafts.

Q: This was meant to be a summary of all that had happened or a report on the experience?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I'm sorry, I didn't mention that. Not only was there a policy determination, when you completed a series, such as when we completed the rural road series, then Bill Anderson wrote a paper that summarized the process, summarized the evaluations and appended the draft policy determination, do you see? There was a big paper, so I did try to write that paper. I didn't have the perspective at that point in my career to be able to do that. I went to the Africa Bureau with the paper unfinished. They brought in new staff that then said the integrated rural development didn't work because that is that the World Bank had concluded. And I would argue that those evaluations demonstrated that there are ways in which integrated rural development works. There are serious problems with it, which gets us into the whole PRT [Provincial Reconstruction Team] thing in Afghanistan, by the way. I will not go there now. But as I concluded, it was not so negative. And this guy came in, he had an editor work on it. And then he rewrote the conclusion to say it didn't work, because that's what the World Bank had concluded. He couldn't have read all those evaluations. And it pissed me off. By that point I wasn't in the office anymore.

Q: You don't remember his name, do you?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Hold on one second. What I'll do before we meet again-

Q: When you write the-

CLAPP-WINCEK: Final report.

Q: Okay, when you edit your version of put the name in, but the thing is that even the people who were involved with integrated rural development at the bank did not believe it was a complete loss. I mean, I think, there were mixed views. I mean, there were pluses and there were minuses, but anyway.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Like anything else.

Q: Richard left, where did Richard go at that point? Do you remember?

CLAPP-WINCEK: It may come to me as I talk about. In the sort of the '83, '84 range, he had this conceptualization that you should bring the library into the evaluation office, that it should be a combined history, learn from your past. What happened in my view, and it is sad that you cannot ask Richard this. And I'm trying to think who else you could ask. You could ask Molly. She probably has a very different view than I do and would expound even more than I do, which is hard to believe. My view of what happened,

especially since Richard basically pulled them together and created CDIE. He partially wanted it because he wanted the budget. I'm pretty sure.

Q: Do you remember when CDIE was created?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I think it was '83. I can look that up, too.

Q: But you were, I mean, you left.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I was still there until 1987.

Q: You were in the office of evaluation. That's what it was still called?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yes. I was still there. I was still working on Bennett impact evaluations. They were starting to kind of limp along.

Q: Bob Berg was still there?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Oh, long gone. No, no. Who did he piss off? I think he pissed off— I think it was in the McPherson era. But I don't know, you'll have to ask Bob Berg someday.

Q: But Bob Berg did some important things on this population issue, and so on. I don't know what office he was at, I'll have to go back and check on that. But anyway.

CLAPP-WINCEK: What they did was they exiled him to an NGO [nongovernmental organization]. They didn't want him heading the evaluation office anymore. And they exiled him to an NGO and I didn't really understand. I knew he got exiled to an NGO. Richard had to announce that to the office, because that happened when Richard was still there, right?

Q: CGD [Center for Global Development]? Did he go to CGD? Well, we shouldn't spend time worrying about that.

CLAPP-WINCEK: After Bob Berg got exiled, Richard moved up to be the head of the evaluation office and then turned it into CDIE. And then he went off to—

Q: India?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I thought he went. I do think that's right. I think—

Q: And CDIE stands for?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Center for Development Information and Evaluation. Richard wanted to bring the library together with the evaluation office. But evaluation just kept shrinking and shrinking and shrinking in importance. They were digitizing the library. There was

all kinds of stuff going on and people like Richard and David and Bob and Bill Anderson were all gone. Molly was much more interested in the systems of the agency as a whole than she was in the Bennett impact evaluations. For a while Richard was head and then Molly was head after Richard was head. And I left while Molly was head.

Q: Was Haven North around at that point, or was he—

CLAPP-WINCEK: Haven came later.

Q: Okay, so you stayed until CDIE was created?

CLAPP-WINCEK: CDIE was created. We were exiled to Rosslyn. And my older daughter was born in 1984. And we were definitely in Rosslyn in 1984. Because I had a windowless office and I had a thermometer in my office. And when it got over ninety degrees, I went home. I'm sorry, I'm pregnant. You can't expect me to sit in a windowless office at over ninety degrees. That's why I remember, so in '84. We were definitely in Rosslyn and CDIE was getting to be all about the website and the library stuff. And it's like, this isn't very interesting anymore. And I've been there—

Q: Seven or eight years.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I got hired into the health office to be a monitoring and evaluation officer and lasted less than a year.

Q: Who was head of CDIE when you left?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I think it was Molly. I'm pretty sure it was Molly. And she understood that I just needed to move on and do other things.

Q: But you went into the health office, which was also in Rosslyn, right?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yeah, still in Rosslyn, still exiled. Although, they were even then enough of an opponent power center that I'm not sure exile is the right word for it, but it just wasn't the right thing for me. I was writing an RFP [Request for Proposal]. I don't want to do this work. So the Africa Bureau, reached out to me and asked if I could come be the monitoring and evaluation officer for the Africa Bureau?

Q: Okay, during that year we're talking '84?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I was in the Health office probably in 1986. It was maybe nine months. I did not last long. I did not like it. I mean, I was partially looking for a promotion. I came into USAID at a GS-9. When I left the Department of the Interior, I was a GS-2 and then I was a GS-9 my next year because by then I had a master's degree. And I had step increases that went up for a while. Molly promoted me to a GS-13. But I'm sorry, I was there from '79 to '91. I was there for thirteen years. And I'd spent seven of them as, no, that's not right. I was in that office for seven years. But I've been a GS-13 for

like four years. And there was no indication that I was going to ever be anything but a GS-13. So that was part of the reason I had to leave that office.

Q: When you moved to the health office, did you get a promotion?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Nope, I was still a GS-13 but I figured that if I went to do this other kind of work, there might be the possibility of promotion. But then I decided it wasn't worth it. I went into the Africa Bureau again, at a GS-13 and stayed a GS-13. The whole time I was in the Africa Bureau. And everybody kept telling me that if I wanted to get a promotion, I should become a desk officer. But that's not interesting. What I did was really interesting. And that was part of my decision making to go out and become a consultant; that and the fact that I had two small children.

Q: How long did you spend in the Africa Bureau?

CLAPP-WINCEK: '86 to '91.

Q: So five years there. All as a GS-13. And your job there, did it change over time? What was the essence of your work there?

USAID/Africa Bureau, Evaluation Officer, 1986 - 1991

CLAPP-WINCEK: That was fun. The very first thing I did (since I was the newest person in the Africa Bureau) was to write the history of the Africa Bureau. For a Hill [Capitol Hill] hearing, it was for a Hill hearing. And I don't mean staffers, I mean, it was a hearing, because by 1987, we were in the second or the third of those 1980s droughts, we had spent four billion dollars in Africa. And the Hill wanted to know what we had to show for it.

Q: So it wasn't really the history of the Africa Bureau, it was the history of the recent experience of—

CLAPP-WINCEK: It was supposed to be the history of what they had gotten for their four billion dollars of investment. That's what it was supposed to be. I was digging through all the stuff and working with the economists who've got the numbers and the Economic Social Data Bank people and pulling it all together. I got to sit through the hearing. It was fascinating.

Q: You wrote that report. I mean—

CLAPP-WINCEK: I did. I'm sure somebody edited it '87 times. But yes, I did write it.

Q: What came out at the end was close enough to what you had written or you had determined, did you reach judgments about what had been achieved and what had not been achieved? Was it using your evaluation skill? And not just your writing ability or your research ability?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Oh no, I think those are all of a piece. Do you know what I mean? We didn't do any evaluations for it. I did think that it was my job to read all the evaluations that the Africa Bureau put out. The entire time I was in that job I was reading a couple hundred evaluations a year because that was the era where they were doing a midterm and a final of every project. And that was as close as they had to a monitoring system.

Q: That must have driven you crazy.

CLAPP-WINCEK: So well. Then Emmie Simmons came to be my boss. And Jerry Wolgin was the head of the economists in whatever you call the program offices of the Africa Bureau. We were in the program office in the Africa Bureau. He was over the economists staff and Emmy was over the strategy, monitoring and evaluation division. And John Wesley was the office director, and this is that DFA era, the Development Fund for Africa era, where this is being negotiated by the powers that be in the Africa Bureau, Larry Sayers. Larry Sayers was the AA [Assistant Administrator] for Africa. And either that, or the DAA [Deputy Assistant Administrator] for Africa,

Q: I think, the DAA probably.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I think the DAA, but he was prominent in this negotiation with the Hill. And the basic deal with the Hill was okay, we put together this report, you don't feel like you're getting the reporting you need on impact. We will be transparent about impact. And you will give us a protected budget because we keep losing our budgets to all the other bureaus, because things are bad in Africa. And they had sort of this negotiated agreement.

They had created an action plan. Colette Cowey was in a different part of the Bureau. And they had created an action plan, there was a CDSS [Country Development Strategy Statements]. Originally, Country Development Strategy Statements were twenty-five year documents. And the Africa Bureau had come up with a three year action plan. And they were calling all the missions in to present their action plan. And Carol Peasley was chairing the meetings because they had to present their action plans. USAID was also cutting missions at this point. It was an era of "focus and concentrate". That was in the Africa guidance, particularly this action planning guidance. And it was focused on a fewer number of problems and concentrated resources on those problems. So that we can have enough of an effect to have a fighting chance to see impact. Because of course, if you just sprinkle your money around to all these different projects, you don't achieve critical mass.

It was an era of transition. USAID was no longer the largest donor in these countries. When I came in in '79 we tended to be the largest donor. World Bank was just pulling out ahead and taking leadership in that era. And Africa Bureau was in a focus and concentrate era and they were cutting countries. And they did. They cut thirteen countries in that era. Either that or they cut it down to thirteen. With regional programs. I forgot.

In the meetings, field staff came in, and I watched people talking past each other. They were trying to talk about what impact they were going to have. And they were mixing up their objectives with their indicators with their higher order objectives and what was supposed to work together to achieve what. And one weekend, I was like, okay, I can't stand this anymore. This is driving me nuts. What we need is the equivalent of an objective tree (or a logframe) that reaches up to the country level. Functionally, what you're going to do is you're going to go sector by sector, right? So rather than having the objective, I'm sorry, not an objective, a logical framework. And that's what I said, is we need the equivalent of that, to reach up to the country level. The tool behind the log frame [logical framework] is the objective tree, which I knew well. And so what I did was I took all of the words in the action planning guidance, and then I put them with a picture that looked like an objective tree and each objective on the tree had a shadow box with the indicators in it, so that we would start distinguishing between the objective and the indicator. And in the objective boxes of the different levels. You'd have the theory of change, when it's approved becomes a plan. You have a plan of what you plan to achieve above the project level with indicators of how you're going to measure that change.

Q: And you created this over the weekend?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I did do that. There was one thing that was definitely a mistake that got fixed later. But what I did that weekend eventually became a results framework. And I presented it to at least Emmy and Colette— Who was in that room? I still, I was really a pretty shy and quiet person but I was just frustrated. It's like, wait a minute, I've got tools, you guys pay attention to the tools, so that you're arguing about the substance, and not about the jargon.

Q: And these people the people you're talking about arguing were inside AID; it was not with the Hill staffers. This was this is an AID thing as they tried to develop the—

CLAPP-WINCEK: These action plans that were supposed to lay out how they were going to achieve this people-level impact. And I can't remember who was in the room, it was a staff meeting. Probably it was a PPL [Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning] staff meeting, and I said to Emmy, I've got these ideas. And I think this would help so that when Carol Paisley chairs these meetings, they're not talking past each other, that they're talking about the same stuff.

Q: What was the reaction?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Very positive. And then I started training people on how to do this. And I must have done that presentation to hundreds and hundreds of people before I left the African Bureau in 1991. And it was in that era that results frameworks were created. PPL called a meeting of all the program offices, strategy monitoring and evaluation people. And it was basically at that point that my having used an objective tree to help them think through but no, in a sense, their strategic thinking was in the action plan. I didn't come up with that strategic thinking. That was Colette, Emmy, and Jerry – probably Carol Peasley and Wendy Stickel. They all had this great plan for a strategic

framework but people were getting lost in the jargon I used to say to people, my job was to explain Emmy Simmons to the masses. This was part of that. It's like I could understand Emmy but people were like you want what? And that's how you get in these garbles. And this was a way to explain Emmy Simmons (and all those other smart folks) to the masses. And it worked. It worked in that era where there was a commitment to impact. I don't think results frameworks are working the way they should work anymore. But that's a different story.

Q: But it must have been very satisfying for you to feel that weekend's work. What you pulled all this together was having a significant impact.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I think it's probably the most important thing I ever did in my life. John Wesley got me a medal. I literally held a medal.

Q: Who was it from?

CLAPP-WINCEK: USAID had medals, who knew? I had a literal medal for having done that? Bless his heart.

Q: Do you remember what it said on the medal?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I do not. It came with some commendation deal, which is probably in a box somewhere. But I do feel that was probably the biggest contribution that I made. But then Nina Vreeland was still in PPC and they called the meeting, and they're talking about this. And they're questioning me on one thing. And Nina said, Why did you use this phrase here? And that's when I said, Nina, I made this up over the weekend. I hadn't fully worked out all the details. People in the audience did think that was funny. (This was the meeting that led to the Results Framework).

Q: That's great. It had a reach beyond the Africa Bureau?

CLAPP-WINCEK: It did because it became a results framework which was part of Agency wide guidance. Now, our friend, Tony Pryor takes credit for creating the results framework, which in a way is true. But I honestly don't think that Tony understands the degree to which— he had a goodbye party the other day. And he thanked Mike McGahey, he finally retired from USAID. And he thanks Mike McGahey. And Mike McGahey came over to me at the retirement party. And he said, you guys were doing this system in those days. And it struck me that Tony may have never understood that what he thought he got from Mike McGahey a percentage of it Mike McGahey got from us. Do you see? I was standing next to Patricia Rader, at that particular moment. It's part of what gives me the temerity to tell you the story because it's sort of like, well, am I the only one who remembers it that way? Clearly, Patricia Rader remembers it that way. And I actually think Emmy remembers it that way. But Tony Pryor does not remember it that way. I am sort of like I'm the underpinnings, I'm the underpinnings or the precursor to a results framework.

Q: The Development Fund for Africa. And this was all associated with that, right? It is looked upon as one of the great. I mean, if you ask Carol Peasley, she will highlight this as being perhaps the best system that has been put together by AID, and particularly one that had the collaboration of the Congress, and it was done with a lot of back and forth with the Congress. Did you find that as you were working this out with the AID staff, that you were also asked to explain some of this to the people on the Hill who endorsed this and congressmen like Matt McHugh, and others were very instrumental in making sure this worked. But you put the underpinnings in there, I just wondered, did ever get called upon to?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I don't think so. I don't remember doing the Hill in that era. I don't remember doing the Hill until I left USAID actually. And then for other reasons, I started getting called up to the Hill, but because I was an independent person that they could—

Q: But I presume—

CLAPP-WINCEK: I was too much in the guts. Do you see what I mean?

Q: Yeah, but I presume that when Carol or whoever was responsible for I don't want to say negotiating, but working this out with the Hill, and they were talking about how they were going to demonstrate what the achievements were, they must have talked about this because they had in hand, you're much stronger and much clearer way of presenting this. I assume that was the case.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I assume that as we started to do the visuals that went with the action plans, they would have seen those. I don't know that. I don't know that. Carol will know that better than I. I was so busy teaching this to people.

Q: Yes, of course.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I was no longer doing substantive work. Me and my flip chart. I mean, that's why people joke about me and flip charts. I was lugging that flip chart through the hallways, because I kept doing the presentation for everybody to teach them how this worked. But I will tell you that I will say in that big meeting, Larry Cooley was there. Larry Cooley from MSI was one of the people who created the log frame in the first place. And by the time Nena did that meeting, I think I knew I was leaving USAID because I remember getting up and Larry Cooley caught me in the hallway on the way out. And he said Cyn? A plus. And I was just like, Whoa!

Q: That's an important feature of this. This is not a time to be excessively modest. You need to tell the story of what happened.

CLAPP-WINCEK: That particular bit is pretty braggy. I don't have to say all the nice things.

Q: I know but that's a kind of bragging from a person who is really very highly respected. What was Larry's job at that point?

CLAPP-WINCEK: He was the head of MSI.

Q: He was in that meeting anyway, because he was consulting?

CLAPP-WINCEK: He was still consulting to the Systems Division. And as a creator of the original system as Nena and Molly and those guys knew. It was Larry Cooley, Molly's ex husband, Leon Rosenberg, and later to agree, Molly, who were part of Practical Concepts Inc, which created the original log frame system.

Q: Right, exactly.

CLAPP-WINCEK: So of course, Larry Cooley is still in town. So you bring him in, right? Get Larry's thoughts on this.

Q: All right. And this is what you spent much of your time on, until you left the Africa Bureau and you left AID in 1991. Is that right?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yes. And I will say, still GS-13 the whole time. I'm doing this stuff, no promotion. As a civil servant, they needed a different kind of job. In my own mind, the next job for me would have been the strategy job. But the strategy job— because this was all about using these tools to create strategies, that would have a fighting chance of achieving impact. In my mind, that would have been the next job for me, but that was a foreign service job. And I do not have a career here as a civil servant. That's why I left.

Q: It's almost the witching hour. And so this is probably also a good place to break. When we come back, we will talk a little bit more about your decision that this was not the place for you to be any longer, and then you're going to move into consulting. But this first part of your AID career has been fascinating for me, because these are things that I really was not fully aware of, and should have been.

CLAPP-WINCEK: You were off at World Bank.

Q: Well, by that time I was but even some of the earlier parts I should have known about. But anyway, it's fascinating as a way of learning about how this all developed because these concepts are ones that you spent years implementing and in lots of different ways. Let's bring this to a close now and we'll set up a new date and that's okay, so let's end this. If I can find it.

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Q: This is now recording session number two with Cynthia Clapp-Wincek. Welcome again, Cynthia, nice to see you. When we left off the last time, you were saying that you had decided that there was no future for you at AID [United States Agency for International Development], and you were going to leave AID, this was 1991, I think. The reason for that was that you really weren't able to get much in the way of a promotion because the strategic job, whatever that job was called, was reserved for foreign service officers. Was this a stated position or just one that people knew that they weren't going to consider a GS [General Service] person for this kind of a job?

CLAPP-WINCEK: It was certainly clear because they would only recruit foreign service officers. I think it was stated, actually, I can't remember if I literally out loud expressed interest in it, and got told that it was a foreign service job, it was just so clear that it was a foreign service job. That was the one job that looked of interest to me. Now, I should say that I think in a lot of ways it was kind of the primary criteria because they were having super desk officers in those days. And people were telling me that I should move into a super desk officer position to be able to get a GS fourteen. And I didn't want to be a desk officer. Monitoring and Evaluation are inherently interesting to me, they really have suited me. And I didn't want to go be a desk officer, which really, it's a glorified secretarial position, even though they paid more for it than what I was doing. And it's like, no, I don't want to do that. So I kind of looked around and short of going back to CDIE [Center for Development Information and Evaluation], if I went to another Bureau, I would have been structured into the same problem.

Q: Interesting. I just wasn't aware that they had this kind of distinction but as far as the desk officer was concerned, these were people working on the operational offices and working on countries or was this—

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yeah. The folks in the regional bureaus who backstopped countries and those jobs had just been made? Well, I don't know, maybe some of them had always been fourteen, but they were fourteens. And at that point in time, they were talking about them as being sort of super desk officers and wanting them to take on more characteristics than the secretarial, I think, so that they could attract a different kind of person, and it just did not appeal to me. Now, as I say this, I should also say I had two small children. I had a husband who worked twenty-four seven. So, there was not a lot of support in terms of parenting from that side. And so those were also factors. I don't know if I mentioned in the last, what was funny is that was exactly when USAID was moved out of the State Department into the Ronald Reagan Building. There are people to this day who will tell you that I left because they moved to the Ronald Reagan Building, but that was not actually one of my criteria. It was just that there were people who were so upset about it that they assumed that was a big factor for me. And I really couldn't have cared less.

Q: —I see. Okay. What people were concerned about in that move was the narrow long, narrow corridors in the Reagan Building, or what was so alarming that they thought that you and everybody else would hate it?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Well, there are a couple of factors, actually, I think the key factor is being moved away from the center of power, the Department of State. I think senior leadership saw it as an opportunity to be more independent. But old hand USAID folks saw it as well, how do we coordinate with the State desk officers? There was a lot of interaction that was going to become harder, and it played a role in complicating, I think, it played a role in complicating the relationship between State and USAID. And if I could digress for one moment, in 2005, is when they created the F bureau. Actually, it isn't F wasn't a bureau at that point. It was a deputy administrator, I'm sorry, a Deputy Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, right, you probably noticed. And at that particular point, I was working in the Department of State, which we will come to later. But all the Department of State folks thought this was a takeover by USAID. And the USAID folks thought this was a takeover by the Department of State, but it's just a little indication of how that relationship had separated, and wasn't any longer a close working relationship, I think at the worker level. They were worried about that.
Also, there was one colleague, who was very concerned that you could bring a bomb into the building because there was a subway. And right there was a subway underneath the building, and there was an open food court, and it was vulnerable to being blown up. And I'm trying to remember which bombing had just occurred that had him nervous about that [Cynthia is likely referencing the 2005 7/7 Bombings, where Islamic Extremists detonated several suicide bombs on London subways]. The other thing is, everybody was told to get rid of their paper, we were not going to do paper anymore. And that led to the famous instance, where the financial management people got rid of all of their papers, and then the new computer system crashed. There is one year for which USAID does not literally have financial data. They kind of reconstructed it, but it didn't actually exist. I think the one that people worried about the most because I hung out with pack rats like me was that you had to get rid of all your paper, Joan Atherton. Do you remember Joan Atherton?

Q: No, by 1991, I'd been gone for ten years.

CLAPP-WINCEK: True, Joan Atherton was there when you were there, but she would have been a youngster. But she was such a character. She was such a personality. Almost every time I see her, she still talks about having had to give up all her paper.

Q: Was she working with you in CDIE or where was she?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Nope, she was working in what was the policy shop under you called?

Q: PPC, but-

CLAPP-WINCEK: No, PPC was the whole office. But there was a division within it.

Q: The Policy—

CLAPP-WINCEK: —policy—

Q: —Whatever it was—

CLAPP-WINCEK: That just did policy under PPC. She was in there.

Q: This is the first I've heard that you had to give up all the paper. But I did know that the computer system failed, that was only seventy or eighty million dollars worth of computer system as I recall. Okay, back to you.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I did not leave because of the move to the Ronald Reagan Building. It just had more to do with— I didn't see a career path. I had small kids, and went out to be an independent consultant, which actually worked out incredibly well.

Q: I mean, did you feel any trepidation of leaving the protection of a government agency bureaucracy to go out on your own?

CLAPP-WINCEK: No, because although that dear man that I used to be married to— works twenty-four seven, he made a ton of money.

Q: And he did share that with you.

CLAPP-WINCEK: He certainly did. It gave me a freedom that other people do not have. I need to give him credit for that. It allowed me to have freedom in my career. He gets credit for many things, and he allowed me freedom. I looked around and I went okay, I'd love this job, but I need to do something else. I really don't see anywhere that I would really want to go, that's gonna be a possibility. This is a Foreign Service Agency. And as a civil service person, I'm sure that you are aware that your salary and stuff are within your job. I mean, the civil service system is, of course, completely different. To be able to move, I would have had to move to a completely different job. John Wesley had tried to get me promoted at one point. And had been unsuccessful. They were basically just like, no, we don't do fourteen for a single Bureau, we would do that for CDIE. But I'd already been in CDIE, and didn't want to go back. No, I had tremendous freedom and started consulting. I did a bunch in those early years with MSI because I knew those guys, Management Systems International, were the best in terms of monitoring and evaluation systems work. How the monitoring and evaluation system in an agency should work. And because of that, I knew all those guys, and did a bunch of work with them.

Independent Consultant, 1991 - 2003

Q: And did you have any choice about with whom MSI was consulting or because MSI was going around doing consulting jobs for organizations, agencies and so on? And did they hire you to go to a specific organization, was it for government agencies, or?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I took specific jobs from them. And I tended to take jobs that were manageable with no travel because of that issue of the small kids. And so I would just take a piece of work from them, something else they were doing, I wasn't even managing the pieces of work. I would just take a piece of work under one of their staff, and do the work and make money. And I did learn a bunch of stuff. Enough people there knew me that things would come up. The funniest one was probably most of it was USAID, work I'm trying to remember back to those early days, it was so long ago, I remember doing a big study with Molly Hageboeck. I am pretty sure that was USAID. I can't remember anymore. It was one of those deals where we were doing the desk review for a big study she was doing. So I was going through all these documents and against a set of criteria and scoring. And they were not evaluation documents. They were much more economic than that. The funniest one was, Larry Cooley got hired by the UN population fund to do some work. And he asked if I would work on it with him. And so he and I go up to New York, and we meet with the client. And it seems to have gone pretty well. What Larry didn't understand is that Larry thought he was handing the work off to me, he wasn't actually reading the emails because he thought he had handed the work off to me— they didn't want Larry to hand the work off to me. They gave me a different scope of work, which was nice, which they thought I was good at, right. But they gave me a different scope of work.

Q: What was the difference between what they thought they had asked him to do and what you were being asked to do? I mean, were these wildly different or what?

CLAPP-WINCEK: His was a classic strategic planning for the unit we were working for. He was doing strategic planning work, and all that work I had done on the results, frameworks and stuff. That was certainly in my skill set, right, which is why Larry thought he was going to take me up there and pass the work off to me. He eventually apologized, because then when he actually looked at the other scope of work, it was management consulting, it was much more about strategy for their staffing, and I had only done programmatic strategy. I had never done this kind of HR [Human Resources] type stuff before, and I was literally in somebody else's office over there borrowing books off the shelf to read up on this stuff to try to figure out what I was doing. And Larry, as I say, eventually apologized. He probably sat down and did that spread strategy in about a day. I mean, he was good at that stuff. But I never did have any more to do with that piece of work.

Q: I see. But you were trying to do it, right?

CLAPP-WINCEK: No, no, I was doing—No, I was hired to do something else. I mean, it was clear to me, I was reading the emails, the client had taken me off of that. They wanted Larry to do it, and only Larry to do it. And if Larry had been reading the emails, he probably could have gotten some support from me, without really telling them. But what they had said was that I was not on that. But I was given this separate piece of work. So I was off working on my separate piece of work that was much more administrative, much more administrative.

Q: But that's what I mean is that this is not stuff that you were accustomed to doing. But you did it anyway.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yes, because Larry said he didn't hire anybody else to do it. And would I please do it? And he was sure I would do fine. I don't know if I did fine.

Q: A plus, anytime you worked for Larry, you got an a plus, right? You were adapting very quickly, you were going off and reading other people's books and things like that.

CLAPP-WINCEK: It's what consultants do, right?

Q: I don't know, I've never been a consultant of that kind. I don't know how to do that.

CLAPP-WINCEK: You take a piece of work and study it up. I mean, it's much like doing an evaluation in that sense. So that my years with evaluation had kind of brought on those skills. You get a topic and you study up on— you do the desk review, the background reading, and then you go out and you interview people, and then you write it up. And this was like that, I had to do a little bit more background reading that was just sort of the concepts and how people dealt with that kind of administrative management, which I've never really paid any attention to. And frankly, I would have said, USAID wasn't very good at that so that any models were not anything I wanted to apply to the UN.

Q: But you had no difficulty finding work, it was mostly with MSI. Is that correct?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Twice, I never worked directly for MSI. If you work directly for a company, then they will tell you which projects to take. And I didn't want to do that. And the other thing is, if you work directly for a company, you're expected to do marketing and write proposals. And I didn't want to do that either. I wanted to do substantive work. So kind of the deal was that I was a pair of hands to help out people, I would take on chunks of work. When it was something that I wanted to work on. They had a title for it for a period of time, it was called a closely held associate.

Q: Closely-wait a minute, wait a minute, closely-

CLAPP-WINCEK: —Held associate.

Q: I see. And the holding was being done within the framework of an MSI series of opportunities, I mean that they-

CLAPP-WINCEK: Well, and from their point of view, I was like a trusted colleague. I was treated in some ways like an employee with access to information and things like that. But I didn't have to go to the Monday marketing meeting. There was stuff I didn't have to do that other people had to do. I did notice that they eventually curtailed that category. Because it was too good of a deal. Other people were like, well, she doesn't

have to go to the marketing meetings. Why do I have to go to the marketing meetings? And they would basically say, because you're an employee, and she is not.

Q: How different was what you were doing in these first couple of years, say, in this special role with MSI, as contrasted with what you had been doing at AID in the previous several years, was it a very different kind of experience?

CLAPP-WINCEK: So the Africa Bureau, which was my last six or seven years at USAID, had been about building up monitoring and evaluation in the bureau. And so all the tasks I did were related to building up monitoring and evaluation in the bureau until I got into that strategic planning thing. Teaching people how to use an objective tree to think through their country's strategies. I mean, basically that was like the last three or four years of my work was just going around teaching people how to do that, facilitating groups of people to think through strategies to get to people level impact, focusing on a fewer number of problems and concentrating resources on those problems. I wasn't giving enough credit to Carol Peasley. Carol Peasley was heavily—I thought about it after you and I talked— she was heavily involved in that whole process. And the conceptualization of that action plan, I was remembering people like Colette Cowley, who was in my office, and Carol was in the PD office, Carol headed the PD [Project Development] office in the Africa Bureau, and part of the time Wendy Stickle was over there. And I wasn't giving enough credit to those guys, just because they weren't as proximate to me, but as I thought back on it, it's like, oh, no, Carol was a huge leader and all of that work. And I was doing that work, which was fun, and I had a lot of visibility. But as I say, I wasn't going anywhere careerwise.
When I left USAID, it was much more like when I had been in CDIE and had been a research associate, where I had been doing background work on these evaluations and getting the old retired files to use as background for the teams that were going out on evaluation and filtering through all of that data and coming to some conclusions and stuff. The work I did at MSI was actually more like that; it was just straight, generally straight analytic work. I was there for about three years. And I don't know, so I left them for a while. And then we went back again. I could try and figure out why I started doing it, I must have taken some big piece of work. And then I had a desk on the boat again for a while. Then I had a consulting practice kind of established and started going to other clients. What happened probably the second time, that's probably about the time that I got the job at Europe and Eurasia Bureau and the Department of State. Carlos Pascual called and asked me if I would take—he was creating EUR/ACE [Europe Bureau Assistance Coordinator for Europe and Eurasia]. You know about SEED and FSA?

Q: Well, tell me about it.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Okay. SEED and FSA. So, in '89, when the former Soviet Union broke up, Congress allocated funds for the former Soviet Union and Europe and Eurasia, kind of that whole sphere, and they didn't want to give it directly to USAID. So they created a SEED office, which was Eastern European development. That was the SEED fund. And then they created the FSA Fund, which was former Soviet and I don't know what the A was for. So there was the FSA. There were two funds.

Q: These were not in AID?

CLAPP-WINCEK:They put them into the Department of State, there were two offices, and a lot of the money went from State down to USAID but also they had other kinds of stuff that State would do. INL, International Narcotics and Law Enforcement. They did a bunch of the law enforcement stuff. They had science programs where they were funding nuclear scientists to give them jobs so that they wouldn't take a job someplace building bombs. I mean, there were programs that State did that were outside the purview of USAID, which I think is part of the reason they put them in State Department. Carlos in about—I went over there in 2004—This was right after the GDA [Global Development Alliance] evaluation, I should back up and tell you about the GDA evaluation. I'll do that in a minute. Carlos Pasquale was asked to create a combined SEED and FSA office, which was called the Assistance Coordinator for Europe and Eurasia. He was the Assistance Coordinator for Europe and Eurasia, and he wanted a program office and he called me up and asked me if I would take that job, which I did.

Q: It was Carlos. Had Carlos been in the State Department all this time, or was he— had he been in AID? I mean, I've forgotten what—

CLAPP-WINCEK: He was in AID. If I had stayed in the Africa Bureau, he would have been my boss. He took Emmy Simmon's job. He was a USAID Foreign Service officer. And he took Emmy Simmon's job, but that was the point at which I left. He always gave me a hard time about leaving right before he got there. And it's like it had nothing to do with you. I just needed a change. I needed more scope. What's funny actually, in retrospect since he hired me, but because we would joke about that, he knew I wanted more scope and monitoring and evaluation. So he hired me to be the program officer in EUR/ACE. That's what they called it. Europe Bureau Assistance Coordinator for Europe and Eurasia, they called EUR/ACE. And I was in charge of the budget, I was in charge of the strategy work, and I was in charge of the monitoring evaluation and learning work.

Q: They didn't call this a desk officer position?

CLAPP-WINCEK: It wasn't the desk officer position, because I was an officer for two billion dollars worth of assistance. I mean, I was the budget person. Obviously, he was making most of the decisions, which was fine with me, but I was the one who supervised the budget staff. It was a program office; not a desk office.

Q: But AID also had an Eastern European, and it had a Russian. Carol Peasley. I don't know if that's when Carol went to Moscow, as the mission director, but-

CLAPP-WINCEK: She was the Mission director in Moscow, yes.

Q: But this was the time that you had both State and AID with these programs. And George Ingram had-I just don't know the years of these associations, but this was long after I guess George Ingram had been there. Anyway, that's not material.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I remember, it's Don Presley because I subsequently did that GDA evaluation with Don Presley. And Don Presley was adorable. He was the AA [Assistant Administrator], or originally the DAA [Deputy Assistant Administrator] for what they call the originally E and I Bureau, but then the E and E, Europe and Eurasia bureau at USAID. And they were getting all their money from EUR/ACE and its predecessors. That's how it worked. That money went to that State department office and down to them. And they hated it, because USAID was used to getting its own money, its own separate allocation. So they hate that.

Q: What-No, I'm sorry, go ahead.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I should just finish this one bit about Don Presley because this was 2003 now that I was working with Don Presley, and with that twinkle in his eye, did you ever work with Don Presley
Q: No, I did not.

CLAPP-WINCEK: He was awesome. It was twinkle in his eye. He goes, "yep. With a bit of hubris. When we started E&E, we thought we'd be out of those countries in ten years", and it was now like, twenty years later.

Q: But we've kind of moved rapidly from 1991, all the way up to ten years later, and so on. But in 1991, that's when you were working mostly with MSI?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Well, actually, it would have been closer to '92 because I left USAID in the summer of— like June of 1991. My other funny anecdote about that is in March, I got a call from the security people that they wanted to update my security clearance. And I said, "why?" And the guy said, "Well, we do them every five years." And I said, "I've been here fourteen." And he said, "we're running a little behind." And I said, "I'm leaving in June. I don't need a new security clearance." and he goes "great!" and hangs up.

Q: I see. So they didn't want to do one. It's to make it easier for you to do evaluations in these kinds of insecure areas that they didn't, so they never did another one, right?

CLAPP-WINCEK: They didn't do another direct hire at that point. I left in June, and I literally did— I'm pretty sure I did no work for the next six months.

Q: The work you had was raising these children. How old were the children at that time?

CLAPP-WINCEK: All right, let's see. 1991 Jessie was born in 1988. So Jessie would have been two and a half when I left. And Christiana was born in 1984. So Jessie was a toddler, and so I was doing that and just being a mom for six months, which was lovely. I always wanted to be a working mother. I didn't want to not— I mean, we could have afforded for me to not work. I didn't want to be a stay-at-home mom. But it sure was nice to have six months where you were just a stay-at-home mom. And then probably in

January or February, I probably reached out to MSI and it's like, okay, what have you got for work?

Q: Just for the record. What was your husband working at that point twenty-four seven? What was he doing?

CLAPP-WINCEK: He is an employee benefits attorney. The year Christiana was born, which is 1984, he made partner at— it was then called Kilpatrick Cody; it changed names multiple times. They now call it Kilpatrick Stockton. They merged in different practices. He's an employee benefits attorney. It's a subset of tax law. I am surprisingly conversant with ERISA [Employee Retirement Income Security Act] law. The good news is he loved what he did. He still loves what he did. He is now of counsel. Because as you hit seventy, they start cutting down your hours, because they discovered if they didn't do that the old guys took the big salaries and there wasn't enough room for the other people. He's now being forced of counsel. I'm not that clear on— he's probably working maybe halftime, technically speaking. I can't imagine what that halftime looks like though.

Q: Just again, for the record is he Clapp or is he Wincek?

CLAPP-WINCEK: He is Wincek. I grew up Clapp.

Q: Okay. Okay. Now that we've got that straightened out.

CLAPP-WINCEK: As long as we're on the name, however, I should say if anybody ever asks you, tell them not to hyphenate their name, the downstream effects, particularly in this era of computers, when I went back into USAID in 2011, they gave me an email, which was like C Wincek. and I'm like, no, no, no, no, no, no, everybody knows me as Clapp-Wincek. My work name is Clapp-Wincek. I know my legal name is Wincek. But my work name is Clapp hyphen Wincek. And because I was an office director at USAID, they did it. But do you know, to this day, my pension, my health insurance, everything is in Clapp-Wincek because USAID had one system; there is no accommodation for a work name and a legal name. They just turned it over to Clapp-Wincek. I'm in the IRS with an alias of Clapp-Wincek. But at this point, I think the alias would be Wincek because so many people use Clapp-Wincek.

Q: But what would you prefer?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Oh these days Clapp-Wincek. In our world this is absolutely Clapp-Wincek.

Q: Okay. All right, Clapp-Wincek.

CLAPP-WINCEK: You've had it right all along, Alex.

Q: Good. Excuse me. Good. Can't often say that. But okay, I'm trying to get this time filled in here properly before we get you into the-

CLAPP-WINCEK: So many little jobs that I don't remember them anymore.

Q: It was MSI, primarily in the first several years, from '92 to '95 or so. When was it that you worked for Carlos, it was not until 2000.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I had printed resumes to look at when we talked the other day. And it's like, Okay, let's see what I can-

Q: Get your resume. If it's-

CLAPP-WINCEK: All of it.

Q: Between 2005 and 2006, was there a period when you were not an independent consultant because you have broken it up 1991 to 2005, and then 2006-

CLAPP-WINCEK: 2004.

Q: Well, it says 2005. I'm just reading from your-

CLAPP-WINCEK: Where are you?

Q: At right at the beginning of the first page. Under selected consultancies?

CLAPP-WINCEK: That is when I was a consultant '99. That should be— you're right. That's a typo. That should be 2004. I'm sorry. Who knew? Because you're right. If you go to page three, I went into work with Carlos in 2004. And I think that was February-ish. So I may have been finishing some piece of— No, no, that should absolutely be 2004.

Q: Well, Anyway, anyway, in that period, which is actually thirteen years, you have a list of all kinds of people that you work for, as a consultant, but are there any of those consultancies in that period, that stand out to you as being particularly noteworthy or where you learned a lot or where you found that absolutely impossible, or you were able to change the nature of the way in which that agency was able to actually evaluate the work it was doing. I mean, I realize you don't remember a lot of these things. But were there some noteworthy ones?

CLAPP-WINCEK: So a chunk of work that I did, I worked with Molly __ during those during the second three years that I had a desk on the boat. I worked on—MSI was on houseboats in the Potomac. That's why I keep saying I had a desk on the boat, literally, their offices were in houseboats down in what is now the Wharf. And you would go to work, and it would be on— literally on a boat.

Q: Their current location is not where they were in those days? Yeah, I see.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yeah. When they redeveloped that Wharf neighborhood that marina either shut down or became so pricey that they moved into the offices in— I think in Crystal City.

Q: My impression is that that may be an area where Amazon is taking over. I haven't checked recently. But anyway.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Amazon is at the south end of that same neighborhood. That is exactly what it is. I did a bunch of work with—who is the actress who had a company making clothing, and it became a scandal because she was one of those girl next door type actresses. And the scandal was that the clothes that had her name on them were made by children in China. And so Congress gave money to the U.S Department of Labor International Child Labor Program. So in the international programs in the Department of Labor, there was an International Child Labor Program, and they gave them a bunch of money. And Molly got the job of helping them with monitoring and evaluation. And Molly brought me in. Molly and I worked on monitoring evaluation for international child labor programs for a number of years.

Q: Was Molly not working for MSI, or she was?

CLAPP-WINCEK: She was. When she left being the head of CDIE. So she was the head of CDIE for a period of time. I'm not sure I can figure out the years. And then she knew Alan, the administrator, Alan. He's the one who got sick.

Q: Alan Woods.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Alan Woods. Thank you. And she was his chief of staff, because she knew him. So she went from that job up to be his chief of staff when he came in, and when he died, she went back to MSI. And so because that was a very political position, right. So she went back to MSI. I did this work for Department of Labor. And then we did a little bit of work directly for the International Labor Organization. I remember doing training for them, like in Bangkok. And I trained for them, I guess in Geneva, I went to Geneva a number of times. But that work was with Keith Brown, who then became the president of MSI when Larry stepped back. And so Keith did the literal ILO [International Labor Organization] stuff. And Molly did the international child labor program stuff.

Q: So this was, excuse me.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Pre '91.

Q: Pre '91?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Excuse me, between '91 and 2004. Don't mind me, I have no idea when I did it.

Q: So this was not- Again, using your wonderful tree and all that this was more management structure or?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Oh no we taught them the tree.

Q: You did. So evaluation was a key part of what you were teaching them.

CLAPP-WINCEK: We were teaching them strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation. So we were teaching the tree and what did they call it? They had a different name. They didn't call it a results framework. You don't care. Everybody names this stuff themselves. I don't know why it makes them feel good. There's something called the Rosetta Stone. You know what the literal Rosetta Stone is, right. It has hieroglyphics and I would tell the story and start to realize that these young people didn't know what the Rosetta Stone was. I actually have a little one that I bought when I was in Cairo, anyway. Here Jim Rue had created a Rosetta Stone, which was all the different jargon for USAID, later MCC [Millenium Challenge Corporation], World Bank, all these different people that these NGOs [Non Government Organizations] worked with. He was giving the comparable titles for the different agencies. Yes, we were teaching them. We were very much teaching them using logic models, which is generically what those log frames and results frameworks are called logic models. We were teaching them logic models, which is the basis you use to identify the indicators for your performance monitoring. And then we were teaching them about doing an evaluation and what circumstances under which you would do the evaluation.

Q: Do you have an impression as to-sorry. Were some of these agencies more receptive? Did they seem to take it more seriously? Were you comfortable that after you completed your period with them that they had absorbed it? I mean, how different I mean, some of these are U.S government agencies, others are-they varied, I just wondered whether you thought that you were actually accomplishing something more than simply putting it out there? And were you able to evaluate your own success in getting them to do it?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Well, to me evaluate is a very technical term. However, the International Child Labor Program was very receptive. And I had visibility on them again, later in time in a couple of different ways. One was from when I went into the director at USAID, and we invited in all of the other agencies. And you could see the system that Molly and I had worked on with them at the International Child Labor Program, and some of the people were still there.

Q: How many years after your endeavor there was that roughly?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yeah, good question. So it was pre 2004. And I went into USAID in 2011. Part of the problem is I would have to power up my old computer.

Q: No, don't bother with that. But anyway, it was a significant period of time, they'd been fifteen years.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yeah, at least fifteen years later. And you could tell that they had taken the system, and we're holding on to it. When did I work with you? We did a little bit of work with USDA [United States Department of Agriculture]. The foreign agriculture office at USDA? One of the things that working with these guys left me with, and it was one of the things that happened that got really bad during the Iraq War. I explained why DOL [Department of Labor] got this money. It was this scandal about this actress— Molly could probably tell me who she is— that suddenly somebody is like, Okay, our Department of Labor has to fix this, even though our Department of Labor doesn't work overseas. But I mean, then it did, there was an international child labor program. It used to sort of be that USAID was the foreign aid agency, and there were then some pockets of stuff in other places. And as we know, during one of the famous stories that I do not believe is apocryphal. I do believe that this is a literally true story. Because I was working in conflict at the time. When we invaded Afghanistan, the military guys in charge were like, "Why isn't the U.S Department of Transportation coming in here to build roads?" And they got told that that was because U.S. Department of Transportation did not do that, USAID did that. And they're like, "but USAID is too small. We're already using USAID for everything we could possibly use USAID for, these guys are tiny. We need scale." More money started going into the other agencies to do foreign programs and it exacerbated this problem.

Q: In comparison, that's right. Again, earlier on said something about erasing something from the final transcript. There's no reason to, you're not naming that "Joe Blow was a really incompetent leader",, you're talking about the reality of what you saw, and I would be very disappointed if you were to eliminate that kind of reflection of your experience.

CLAPP-WINCEK: What's hard is, I can work with these people. I mean, monitoring and evaluation isn't so big that— these people will come back into my life for different kinds of things. And they would know that they were there in the period that I'm talking about, do you know what I mean?

Q: But it's still important. And if you wanted to know, I don't know, I mean, there is a way to have something delayed for five years or something like that. I don't know that anyway. Don't erase it. Don't erase it. And we know that. I mean, Carol Lancaster, and who else was wrote this book, talked about seventy-five agencies, one of the glorious things about the time when I was head of PPC [Policy and Program Coordinator] was that we really did have all the budget responsibilities, and we might go to the Department of Transportation to get them to do something. But the money wasn't dispersed that way. And so you're absolutely right. I mean, that this did help to undermine the nature of the strength of AID. But so don't cut anything out like that.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I'll try

Q: All right. I'll try to avoid letting you do that.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I can be— I'm kind of known as a nice person. But the people who know me really well know that the evaluator in me is there. And that I can be very pointed and kind of harsh, and I don't like to be harsh in people's faces.

Q: Well look, you just don't have to tell people that your oral history is now at the ADST website or in the Library of Congress, and you can avoid telling people about it. So most people probably in those other jobs are not the ones you're worried about or are not spending their time looking at oral histories. Not as if it's going to be on the front page of The New York Times or if they read that. I don't know. But anyway.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Moving us back along, which is where you're going. I talked about the ones that are still in my list of selected consultancies, because I pulled the ones that were not USAID oriented for this truncated list. And we talked about U.S DOL, I talked about the UN Population Fund that I worked with Larry, the ILO work with Keith Brown, and there was a ton of other stuff that I couldn't even remember but the one I do remember because this came up in the current work that I'm doing. I'm doing an evaluation for the Bureau for Resilience and Food Security at USAID. And it has shifted. We spent six months on a co-design and Dina Esposito, I don't know if you've come across Dina Esposito, she's the new assistant administrator for that bureau. Big supporter of evaluation. I told them to write an info memo to her telling her about the evaluation. She has changed it and we are now evaluating global leadership. The Bureau's global leadership for— it's literally I haven't done enough interviews to do it without looking, agriculture led growth— inclusive agriculture led growth, resilience, nutrition and water security, sanitation and hygiene. That is what is currently in that bureau. She wants us to look at global leadership. If you could think, have you ever seen evaluations or studies about an aid agency's global leadership or even a foundation's global leadership?

Q: I don't follow this topic very closely— But I presume that there have been some probably self centered approaches in the Rockefeller Foundation or somewhere else to when they're trying to justify whatever they do, or at these organizations that are highly dependent upon foundation support to talk about what their leadership role has been. But no, I haven't seen something from AID. Normally, they're trying to focus on what its capacity is to work even in the United States. But you tell me, is it unique?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I'll keep you posted. This is going to be very interesting. I did a search on— USAID has the DEC [Development Experience Clearinghouse] I'm sorry, I'm slightly sidetracked. But I will come back to this work that led me to consulting work in that time period. So I'm a little sidetracked. I didn't go into the DEC because the DEC has been so hampered since Raj Shah shut it down in 2010 and then got convinced to reopen it. But boy, it broke a lot of links, and it's a mess. But the OECD [Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development] Development Assistance Committee has a website and you can tell what period they were keeping it up because all the evaluations I got were kind of in the 2003 to 2006 period. And I know the guy who is there and I should email Hans Lundgren and ask him, you know, did you create another site? What the hell happened, but I haven't done that. I've read a bunch of stuff that's global engagement, but a little bit less emphasis on leadership. But in the context of this bureau,

part of the work that they are doing is partnership, and they are trying to take leadership in private sector partnership. And what does that take us back to Global Development Alliances, they still do Global Development Alliances? You're somewhat familiar with those, even though they didn't start till 2002, long after you left.

Q: But these are public private partnerships where they get Coca Cola or somebody to join with them and these individual projects? Yeah. Okay.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I did an evaluation. This is where I had the opportunity to work with Don Presley. Don Presley was the emeritus; I was sort of the team leader from an action point of view. But he was clearly the éminence grise [a powerful behind the scenes decision marker or advisor]. And he was awesome to work with, I have to say. We did an evaluation of the Global Development Alliance business model. It was only not even a full handful of years old. I mean, I think it started in like, 2002.

Q: Was there a woman I thought there was a woman who had forgotten her name, but who was the head of it.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Holly Wise. She was very good. And I was glancing at that report this morning, because somebody brought it up to me, one of the things that that evaluation said, and that was like a whole year's work. We did work in thirteen different countries. We had a team of like ten people. And we sent people out to different countries to evaluate the different GDAs in those countries. And then we summarized it all. That was a huge piece of work that I did. It does not say, because this woman that I was talking to yesterday, to help as we're completing the scope of work, we're trying to get some definitional clarity on some of this stuff, which is it's squishy as hell. She said, "Oh, you worked on that GDA evaluation in 2000"— It got published in 2004. I completed my work in 2003. And then CDIE [Center for Development Information and Evaluation] took it and printed a glossy version. And there were a couple things about that that irritated me, they didn't put in the evaluation scope of work. And it's like, "Hey, I'm a professional! The evaluation scope of work is the first annex to these damn things so that people understand how you did it". But anyway. And but she said, one of the things you said is not to have separate GDA incentive funds. And she said "I am being required now to do a GDA Incentive Fund, in spite of the fact that I can cite evaluation findings that say that that is not the best way to go about that." Isn't that interesting?

Q: It is the fact that she actually was reading this and knows about it. That's a good thing.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I was so excited. I wish we could have a conversation about it.

Q: Was your overall conclusion that leaving aside some of these aspects of it, that it was a worthwhile and valuable way to proceed?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Absolutely. What's sad, however, is that there is a paragraph in here that says, x number of years ago eighty percent of kind of development assistance flows

were from bilateral and multilateral donors, and twenty percent was private. So that night using the right terminology. And it said, even at that point, when that report was published in 2004, and I don't know if that was a number that we put in, or if that was a number that CDIE put in. But they said, and at this point, it's flipped thirty percent of official flows. Maybe that's what they said thirty percent was official flows, and seventy or eighty percent and I'm forgetting the current state of affairs— It has flipped over. So clearly, we need to partner with the private sector. And the main conclusion, I would argue, of that evaluation was that working with private foundations is not private sector. Private foundations are a variant of NGOs. Yes, different sets of incentives and disincentives, but the cases where public private alliances were truly successful, was where the core interest of a for-profit company— that doing that alliance was in their core interest of the for-profit company. The most famous one is cocoa, the one that USAID worked on was forest hardwoods in Southeast Asia. And it's actually easier to tell the story on cocoa. USAID wasn't that big in the coco one. But it is the most famous example. USAID, _____, and others were working with cocoa farmers to improve their practices. And the alliance was such that the farmers, the purchasers of the cocoa and the processors, all the way up to the grocery stores, primarily in Europe that bought the candy, were in the same alliance, because all along the way, they needed those farmers to do a good job of producing cocoa. And of course, the farmers are like, "Oh, I've got an assured market". But that's because all of those business entities needed those farmers to be able to produce high quality consistent cocoa.

Q: No, but you're right. This sounds like something TechnoServe was also involved in.

CLAPP-WINCEK: TechnoServe does that stuff. I don't know if they were involved in cocoa but that is where I met the TechnoServe people working on that study.

Q: Yeah, I think they do it. Take a step back, when you were active and doing various things, how do these requests come to you? I mean, is it just that you are well known in this area, and they come to you for help? And to do X, Y, or Z or it's the process of how you as a well known expert in this area, get—

CLAPP-WINCEK: The jobs?

Q: Yeah, I mean, and get this job as opposed to something else. And is there a lot of competition in this area? Or are you unique? And again, don't be too modest here but it would be interesting, I think, for people to know that here's somebody who is not spending their time in an AID office, but is doing interesting work that relates very closely to what AID is doing.

CLAPP-WINCEK: In those days, there were not so many people around. I know I completed my work on the GDA evaluation in 2003, just because of having this conversation with Katie Garcia, I went back and looked it up and was rereading, it's like, how well do I remember the evaluations I wrote twenty years ago, I remembered what I told you. And I should say the flip side of that, which is what Katie Garcia is currently struggling with, and then I will answer your question. But the flip side of that is the same

for a USAID mission. If that partnership is not in the core interest of the strategy that the mission is trying to prosecute, so to speak. It won't be successful. It has to be in the core interests of the private entity, but it also has to be in the core interests of the mission, or whatever office that USAID is entering into that partnership. It has to be in everybody's core interests. And she's being told to create an incentive fund. And that study says don't create incentive funds, because then it's an add on people competing for sort of free funds. And it's like another internal earmark.

How do I get jobs? I got a bunch of jobs because the MSI people knew me. And I would do work for Molly or Keith Brown. So the guys over there knew me. Other jobs, this particular job, the GDA job, is because remember, I talked about Wendy Stickle was working with Carol Peasley in the PD office, when we were training all of the logic model results framework stuff, it became results framework after I left, by the way, it wasn't called the results framework. Let's just go with the logic model. So I knew Wendy, and Wendy had moved over to CDIE, and they were being asked to do a GDA evaluation, even though it was a bit soon to do it. And Wendy called me "Okay, this is what I need help with". And I'm "like, okay, cool". And then it just got bigger and bigger and bigger. Wendy called me, Woody Naven was there, they had decided somebody had decided that Don Presley should work on it, and they had to do triple backflips to figure out how to hire Don Presley who was at Booz Allen at that point. And this evaluation was not being— they weren't doing the evaluation through Booz Allen. Who knows why or why they were doing it a different way. So he was hired separately, he had to get special from— anyway, that stuff that happens. And so it got a little bit big, I must say. But I looked back and I read it, and then I went, that was, okay, good. We did good. I mean, and he had, and I learned a ton from him, because I knew a bunch of stuff. But of course, he had a different kind of arc of knowledge and understanding of the foreign aid business. It was an outstanding experience. And so we were kind of co-team leaders, the evaluation that they published says I was the team leader. But that was probably true, they should have put us down as co-team leaders, and I'm not quite sure why it worked that way. But I gotta say, my resume needed it more than his. And it might have been that he even told them not to do it because of this awkwardness of why his name would be so prominent on a report that was not a Booz Allen report. I mean, he was having other issues that I wasn't even completely aware of. That was one of the big evaluations that I did during that time frame. And it almost always comes from people I know. My major marketing strategy is to go have lunch, which got totally messed up during COVID. I just go down and have lunch with people I know and like.

Q: It's fair enough.

CLAPP-WINCEK: __ and I have lunch with people, and guess what work pops up? "Oh, we need this", "By the way, could you do that?" And I run a little referral service because I'm having lunch with people I like and if they want something that I don't want to do, or I don't think I'm good at, I send it to people I know. When Richard Blue came back from Thailand, I had been asked to do a piece of work. And I said, well, first of all, I'm booked, but I have good news for you. Richard Blue has a PhD in Political Science and has just returned from Asia, and I'm pretty sure you could get him to do it. And he did.

And so then he started doing consulting work after that. But so lots of people— I hand off work to other people, and then what happens? Then when there's something they can't do, they hand off work to me. And I have done a ton of what I call monitoring and evaluation systems work, not the substantive work, like the GDA evaluation, I considered substantive work, it's doing an evaluation. The work with the international child labor program, I call systems work, it's helping them build the monitoring evaluation system in that program. I've done a ton of that and tons of training, because in the early days, I could do a lot more of that without traveling or taking shorter trips. I'd go to Geneva for a week when you do an evaluation, you can be gone for three weeks easily. My longest evaluation trip was to Northern Somalia for five weeks.

Q: And by that time were the children self sufficient or did you–

CLAPP-WINCEK: That one— and I never did that again, because my husband and I agreed that— my younger child was not born— and we agreed that my daughter thought I had died, that I was just gone. And she was mourning my loss. And that was like, okay, I can't be gone five weeks. She fondly remembers that daddy would take her to McDonald's for breakfast and drop her off at preschool everyday. She thought this wasn't such a bad deal. But I'm like, my children aren't orphans when I'm gone. But they got breakfast at McDonald's, which is certainly not what I would've fed them.

Q: Right. Are there any other of these independent evaluations that are remarkable and worth talking about? And you talked about the different kinds of things you were doing? Was the evaluations themselves the most satisfying or did some of these systems work, or did both bring you great satisfaction?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Let me come back to that question, if you don't mind, because I just looked up. What I didn't talk about is the piece of work that in some ways, I'm the most proud of that I did do with Richard Blue. Wendy Stickel called me up to do what's on my resume as the meta evaluation of USAID's evaluation system in 2001. That's the one that Wendy Stickel called me up. The GDA evaluation was not Wendy Stickle, that was Woody Naven, who then had taken Wendy's position as the deputy in CDIE. They wanted a meta evaluation of USAID's evaluation system.

Q: This was 2001?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yeah, no, of course, she would have called me in like '99 or 2000 because that was a big piece of work. I mean, Richard and I, between us, did maybe only six countries, but went out and did field work and so she called me and I called Richard. And just like, "okay, Richard, will you do this study with me?" We did that study together. And which was also fun, although, as I'd worked a fair amount with Richard. I didn't learn quite as much from that study because I learned so much from him the first time I worked with him, but he was great. And so we did that, how is USAID's monitoring— And it was really the evaluation system, we were hired to evaluate the evaluation system, but because of that work that I did that I referred to as the strategic planning, but it was also how you picked indicators and how you organized your

monitoring system, right? I never taught it without saying just these are the if then causal relationships to achieve people level impact, but also how you would monitor each part of that plan. I actually wrote an entire separate piece for that study as an appendix on monitoring because people wanted to talk to me about monitoring. And I wrote it, and they didn't print it with the report. And I don't think I could ever find it again. I've changed computers too many times since 2001.

Q: That's the problem. Yeah.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I don't know where that damn thing is, because they didn't print it, which was really a shame. And one of the things that Richard Blue always said to me was that I needed to get stuff published, that I "only wrote ephemera". That is a direct quote. And he's like, you should get it published and I couldn't be bothered. It's like, I don't care. I write for a client, it either helps or doesn't.

Q: Did he get stuff published when he wrote things?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Well, I kind of had the impression he did, but I don't actually know the answer to that. It was David Steinberg, that up until a year ago, David was still sending me stuff to read that he had written. But not so much, Richard, I guess I literally don't know the answer to that. I kind of had the impression he did because he was always giving me a hard time. But I don't know. We did that meta evaluation of the USAID evaluation system. I'm sorry, I have a career that is hard to do in chronological order because, again, ending in 2009, we sought to repeat that study. By then Gerry Britton was the head of CDIE, and we made a proposal to them because during the 2008-2009 time period, everybody was writing strategies to suggest to the new administration. And all of those strategies, political thought pieces, lobbying pieces, they all said, "and you need to do good monitoring and evaluation." And Richard and I said, we're the ones who know what it takes to do a good evaluation. So we went to Gerry Britton and made a proposal that we would repeat the 2001 study. But he wouldn't fund the fieldwork. And then it's like, "okay, no, then we'll do it on our own. Thank you very much." It was six months. And Gerry had said that he was going to repeat the study in some way, shape, or form. He said he was going to repeat the 2001 study. We took the direction of saying, "Okay, let's look at USAID's evaluation system from the perspective of partners." We have both been on the outside, we've been inside, but we both have been outside. What does this look like to the consulting firms and the NGOs? And what do they think of USAID's evaluation system? Well, as it turns out, people did not want to answer that questionnaire.

Q: For the same reasons that you didn't want to put the information out about these other things, because they were worried that they wouldn't get jobs, right?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Well, they were very worried about some way, shape or form, having their criticisms of USAID be in the ether, right?

Q: Yes, same thing.

CLAPP-WINCEK: So it was a bit similar. The methods on that study were not as strong. But we did it. If one looks up that study, they tend to find the short version, which was a policy brief that we wrote, and the policy brief is actually fairly easy to find.

Q: Was AID, monitoring and evaluation during the early 2000s strong or—

CLAPP-WINCEK: — Weak.

Q:—Weak yeah, but it did exist in some form or another, right?

CLAPP-WINCEK: So when we did the 2001 evaluation, as far as I can tell, USAID either does monitoring or it does evaluation, one goes up, the other one goes down. In the early days, with the whole Bennett impact evaluation series, evaluation went up, and monitoring went down. And then in that early era, up to 2001, the monitoring had been coming up. Certainly in the African Bureau where we had been pushing this framework for creating monitoring systems, the monitoring was going up and the evaluation was going down. And that's why they wanted to do a study on the evaluation system to try and bring prominence to it. CDIE wanted to be able to use it as a public document to push the agency to do better evaluation work. So that was 2001. In 2004, 2005, F [Office of Foreign Assistance] was created. And the evaluation office functionally disappeared. CDIE disappeared, Janet Kerley— Oh, I know that man's name, but I can't think of it— went over to F after a while to do a little bit of evaluation stuff. But basically, evaluation disappeared out of USAID in that Middle 2000s period 2004, 2005, around the time that F was created, and what had been PPC [Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination] was mostly pulled into F, and USAID did not have a PPC for a number of years. And that's part of then in 2009, we're like, "Okay, what's happening with evaluation work?" And Richard and I wanted to push that. And so then we just did the study on our own, so that we could just be independent external experts. That's how— and actually at that point, I would say in 2009. And Molly Hageboeck has done these studies over the years that actually tracks the number of evaluations. There's actually a chart of how the evaluation numbers go up and down over the years. And we set this in that context particularly in the 2009 report, the USAID staff gets some credit. There are people out there who believe in evaluation and just keep doing it, whether it's a policy or not, they just keep doing some of it. It was kind of chunking along at a level, even when it wasn't getting any prominence, wasn't much in the way of a policy saying, I mean, I'm sure in the AID someplace and said you have to do monitoring and evaluation. People just kind of kept chunking along doing it. So that was interesting to know. But I kind of think of those two studies, as the basis from which I speak with authority on the monitoring and evaluation systems for foreign assistance, because I twice did systematic studies of how that work.

Q: You mentioned all that you learned from Richard Blue, the first time. When did you work with Richard, the first time?

CLAPP-WINCEK: That was the Bennett impact evaluations, right. Richard Blue was first the head of the Studies Division conceived the Bennett impact evaluations in 1980.

And I worked with him well, and actually, no, the first time I worked with Richard was those two contracts I did for the mid career retraining program. And then Richard came in and was my boss, although I was there first, as I've pointed out. In those years, I mean, and he was my professor at University of Minnesota. I had many opportunities to work with Richard. And not to say, I didn't learn more from him when we did the 2001 study. And then he and I had gone off and had different kinds of experiences. So then when we did the 2009 study, I again learned some but I would say in those two instances, I learned more from doing the studies because it was something to be able to delve into systematically, and come to defensible conclusions because of the strength of our methods, which is what evaluation should be.

Q: I think it would be very valuable. I think, since we lost Richard Blue before we were able to do his oral history. I think, I mean, I was scheduled to do that, and then he died. If you want to say a few words about his role in evaluation, this may be a good opportunity to do it, since we're not going to hear it from him. What would you say were the outstanding features of his abilities in this area.

CLAPP-WINCEK: His most outstanding feature was just his thoughtfulness and his intellect. What made Richard so prominent in the evaluation field, was creating those Bennett impact evaluations. And the way he led that effort, and worked with academic experts, but also worked with all of the different parts of the agency to understand what was needed, how it would work best, and I still think his understanding of how to situate it in the agency as he held onto the strength of the methods. But putting all those direct hire people on evaluation teams, was an entire generation of USAID staff who not only learned about how evaluation works, they learned how development works. When USAID sends that staff out to do evaluation the way we send contractor evaluators out all the time to walk around villages and interview people, and go into ministries and interview people. They understand development in a way that other USAID people do not understand development because they have not had that real world experience. And that was a generation that the Bennet impact evaluations created; it was a generation. There were all these people who worked in USAID who were part of that effort. And the effort kept going some years after Richard was there. And you will still find people from— like I was gonna say, Wendy Stickel but that's probably not right. I've got to think of a good example of people who stayed— Pam Johnson. Pam Johnson stayed a supporter of evaluation because of having been out on the team— on a team, she was inherently, she was a health person, which means, they get trained in epidemiology and stuff. She was inherently a data person. But she was part of that effort. And I'm trying to think of other people. I was a kid in those days. All those people have retired. And I'm trying to think of who some of those people were on those Bennett impact evaluations. And I think that's why it shaped people's initial understanding of evaluation, which they carried through with them the length of their career, and it was his ability to both understand kind of the academic side. and the bureaucratic side, I think that political science training. He had concepts and structures in his head, but of course, he was charming. And so then he would just go off, and he would work with all of these people. And he'd get them all on board. And they would be releasing their staff for like, a month to work on these evaluations. And he would just overcome, it's like, I can't let my staff go for a month.

And guess what? Then they end up on the evaluation team, and then of course, the fact that we both worked on these two studies continued his prominence in evaluation, even when he wasn't really working in it. I was working in it. He was not.

Q: He was doing private— wasn't he a private consultant doing evaluations? He and Jack Sullivan and other people were doing this for the company that was headed by the fellow who had been the head of the Latin America Bureau.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Wasn't a Development Associates. Didn't Jack Sullivan go to Development Associates?

Q: Yeah. And that wasn't that headed by somebody who had been the head of the Latin America bureau? But anyway.

CLAPP-WINCEK: LAC was their own world because of the Spanish language, and I just never hung with those people.

Q: Okay, so you did the study of AID's evaluation system. Was this form—what happened in the 2009, 2010-2011 period? Was 2011, that you came back to work for AID, is that right?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yes. Because having done that study the second time, Raj Shah hired—

Q: Ruth Levine.

CLAPP-WINCEK: —Ruth Levine, and Ruth Levine had some stuff on the CGD [Center for Global Development] website that they were working on. CGD had done the "When Will They Ever Learn" study and it was just as she was transitioning to work with Raj at USAID. I just went in because I kept up on this stuff. I kind of watched the breaking stuff. From time to time they do evaluation, I watched the CGD stuff because from time to time they do. I just watched this think tank stuff. That's one of the advantages of being a consultant is I could take time to do that— Oh, and guess what? It was also a form of marketing. I just wrote Ruth a series of comments that I posted to the CGD website. And she called me.

Q: She's still at CGD or has she moved?

CLAPP-WINCEK: She was, but she knew she was going to go work for Raj. So she called me and I went and had lunch with her. And then eventually she hired me. It took a while because they had to figure out a way to hire me. That's when they were creating PPL [Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning]. That's just when they— in 2010, I believe it might have been.

Q: I don't think Raj was there in 2009.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Right he got there in 2010. And— unless he got there before— He was there when I got there, I think. Anyway, there were people like Larry Garber and others. There are people who were working on creating a PPL. And I don't know so much about that. I know a bunch of it was 2010. I just don't know if it went back well.

Q: Anyway, that's not a problem.

CLAPP-WINCEK: She called me and basically, she was a DAA. She sort of was doing evaluation, but it was very clear that she would be a DAA. And then she was hiring me to be the head of the evaluation office. And that's what it became. But she had known for months that she was going to have to leave for family reasons, and move to the West Coast. And so then, PPL had to figure out how to hire me, or they weren't going to have anybody.
She was sort of doing DAA and evaluation, she shepherded through the evaluation policy. The evaluation policy was written before I got there. And I was basically asked to come in and implement the evaluation policy, and work on the development of USAID monitoring and evaluation. And of course, we're now in an era where we've added in learning systems CLA: Collaborating, Learning and Adapting. That's what I did.

Q: Well, before we get into that. We've moved quite through quite a number of years in this discussion. Are there any other studies or any other experiences during this period before you rejoined AID in 2011 that we should highlight as being important features of your career?

State Department, Europe-Eurasia Bureau, Assistance Coordination Office, Program Officer, 2004 -

CLAPP-WINCEK: We spoke briefly about EUR/ACE. Those years that I was the program officer for the seed in FSA funds. The USAID people had a tendency to trust me somewhat because I had been one of them. And as an evaluator, it is important to keep out there about your ethics. Do you know what I mean? Objectivity and an open mind and trustworthiness so that people could tell you things. I had been working on making sure that I behaved that way whenever I worked for any client, frankly, but including USAID. They trusted me. That helped. Carlos wanted to create a country strategy thing. USAID had, I can't remember if they were CDSSs [Country Development Cooperation Strategy] at that point, or whatever they were called. I forgot when CDSSs became the newer phrase. But you remember, this is from the older phrase. He wanted a country strategy that was a combined USAID and State Department. And that's why— I think that is primarily why he wanted me, actually is because of the work that I had done. He walked into Africa Bureau, right as I left and had seen, the work I had done with them to create that management system, that practical tools system to accomplish the strategic stuff which is what the John Wesley's and Carol Peasley's and Colette Cowey's and Emmy Simmons's and Wendy Stickels's had written into their action planning guidance, and I was the one who had come behind and said, "Okay, this is how you do that." This is what they want you to do. These are the practical tools to help you think that through and set it up in a way you can monitor and evaluate, and he wanted that, which is probably

why he hired me. So we worked on that, USAID hated it. They had always wanted to be more independent from EUR/ACE. And we were doing pretty well until we got into— the other thing that Carlos did is he used a data system, which is called the monitoring country progress system, created by a guy named Ron Sprout, I believe back in '89, '91 or not too long thereafter, that USAID had been using for E & E [Bureau for Europe and Eurasia]. And I talked to Don Presley about that because he'd been there when it was created. And the idea was to figure out— to track progress on the way the both of those legislations were written was economic growth and democratic governance. Two objectives, you will know, there was no health, there was no education— they found ways to kind of slide those in, but it was those two objectives. And so this monitoring country progress data was a chart of the progress they were making, based on this amazing data system progress countries were making on economic growth, and democratic governance. And this Ron Sprout, this is a brilliant system of data for big picture progress. And so they had been watching the progress from whenever he created it, which must have been '91 ish. I could actually look that up. And there were these charts, all these charts he created, they were just amazing. I was a huge supporter of his. And he's the one who said, I was the only person who'd ever read his three hundred pages of methodology, because I went back and I was asking him questions: "And why this? And how did that happen?" when he goes, "nobody else reads this thing", but we data wonks take these things seriously. Where I got into a little bit more trouble in a situation with Carlos is when he set out graduation dates for countries. And I started to realize that my colleagues in my office were gaming the system. That the USAID people were coming in with data driven recommendations on what a— we shifted the jargon from graduation because that sounded denigrating to phase out what the phase out dates should be, right? Because Congress is like, "Okay, you guys have been at this for twenty years. You told us it would be ten. When are these guys gonna phase out?" And some countries had phased out.

Q: These are countries like Poland and Hungary and yeah, okay.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yeah. But then down into poorer countries in the Balkans, and Kazakhstan was very wealthy, but their democratic governance– and some very poor countries there. And what you could see in the data—just fascinating, if you watch the dates over time, all the countries that had a possibility of EU membership, worked on all the stuff necessary that just moved them right up that access, all the countries that didn't have a prayer of EU membership— or NATO membership, the U.S can hold out NATO membership. And that made some progress, especially on the democratic governance, a little bit less than economic growth. Anyway, it was fascinating. That was although, I let it get back to my USAID colleagues that I had not realized that they were going to game the system. And I was very disappointed, because I felt that I had been caught in between. I mean, I was leading this process. I was chairing the meetings with USAID. And I didn't know that my EUR/ACE colleagues were putting out dates so that they could negotiate backwards and stuff. I mean, they were behaving— these are all people who are trained in bargaining and negotiation, not in evidence-based decision making. So USAID is evidence-based decision making, and they're trying to get their way. And it was a classic State Department-USAID culture clash.

Q: But I don't quite understand. They were gaming the system, and they were setting dates as it was explained to me.

CLAPP-WINCEK: But they set dates that were at a timing that they'd feel comfortable bargaining back from. They knew what their position was, but they would come in with an "entry" position. USAID would come in with the position that they really thought was the right answer. The people in the office I worked with were coming in with positions that were not what they expected to be the final answer. They were following bargaining and negotiation theory. They'd set out a number, and then they'd be able to work themselves back to the position that they thought they would really be the best.USAID was at a disadvantage because USAID came in with a real number. And then where do they go from there? They were serious about these phase outs. That got to be a little awkward for me as I got caught in between.

To finish off with EUR/ACE, Carlos left while I was still there. Carlos was really fun to work with. He was really smart. Sadly he was his own worst enemy. And I came to understand some things later which left me very disappointed in him. He left because he was asked to set up what is now called CSO, the Conflict Stabilization Office at the Department of State. He got a call from the Deputy Secretary of State, who was very famous, you would know, who basically said, "Carlos, you have to set up this office" and Carlos is like, "I really like what I'm doing in EUR/ACE". And the guy says ,"I'm so glad. In like six weeks, you're going to go over and set up this office." He said he had no choice. At the time, it was called the coordinator for reconstruction and stabilization. This is not the office of transition initiatives at USAID. It is a comparable office in the State Department. USAID would argue that State Department did not need such an office because they already had it covered. This Deputy Secretary of State argued that State Department did need this office. Now, this was the beginning of the era of the three Ds: Defense, Development, and Diplomacy. And so this office was supposed to be the coordinator of all three Ds. The moment the decision was made to situate that office in the Department of State they kneecapped it, and it never had a fighting chance. You can't coordinate three entities if you're in one of them. That office has had a very wonky history, one could do an oral history of that office, which would actually be a fascinating case study of bureaucracy. Anyway, I spent some time working on conflict.

Q: I'm just looking to see, because you have this book that was written by— I'm sure you've read— which is, Peace Works, Rick Barton's book. Rick Barton was, first, the head of Office of Transition Initiatives, and then moved over to the State Department version of that.

CLAPP-WINCEK: He took over that office. He's a great guy. But between you and me, he could pay more attention to his data. After he left USAID, he was at a think tank and he worked on a study that was in the Washington Post. The methods that they used to do the study had no business being used for decision making. He didn't have specific enough criteria. And he sent different staff out, and they put a point on the graph with no real criteria of what those points signified. There was no way that you could analytically

derive how they got those points. Now, if he had sent the same people back to the same places, you would at least have the same person's impression of change over time. As it was, it was totally capricious, and had no business being used. And I'm still cranky with him over that. And I told him so. It's like, "Rick, you need a scale and a rubric, you have a scale, but you have no rubric!"

Q: Fascinating. That's another thing.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I switched over to the office that became CSO. It's in some ways, the biggest career mistake I ever made, because the way that office developed, I sort of ended up in a corner. I lasted maybe a year and a half and quit and went back to consulting.

Q: When was that that you were?

CLAPP-WINCEK: That's 2004-2005.

Q: That's where the gap was.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Page three, 2004-2005. I was in Europe and Eurasia. I was in EUR/ACE. And then in 2005, I shifted over to what was then the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction, Stabilization, and is now I think, when it became Conflict and Stabilization, or Conflict Stabilization Office, they call it CSO. My time there was not happy. I led a very interesting conflict assessment to Chad, but I hadn't created the methodology. We relied on a methodology created at USAID by a woman who went to Mercy Corps. But that was fascinating. And then the resume says I developed training for the interagency planning for conflict transformation at Foreign Service Institute. There was a class created at Foreign Service Institute that I worked with my colleague, Barbara Stevenson, who after that became the Ambassador to Panama. She's awesome. Oh I'm so sorry, she went from that office to being the Deputy Chief of Mission in London under a very political Ambassador. Then she became the Ambassador to Panama.

Back to 2005, amongst us, with one other colleague, we created a training program. My understanding is that there's some version of it that's still being used at the Foreign Service Institute. My part of the training used the approach that I was training in the African Bureau. That became, I had learned log frame I had then I had figured out how to expand the log frame to a country scope. And then I just kept going around and using it with whatever I did. So that was similar. And then I went back to consulting in— Yeah the numbers don't match from page one to page three, that's awkward.

Independent Consulting, 2006 - 2011

Then I went back to independent consulting. And the most interesting stuff I did, then, I had a consultancy with RAND Corporation for the Government of Qatar. They were professionalizing their development assistance agency. Previously, the way that it had worked was his Highness and her Highness would go someplace, they'd be asked for a

school, hospital, whatever. And they'd tell the emir to write a check. But then they had decided that maybe that wasn't the way to do it.

So they'd hired RAND. And I was on that team to tell them how to do monitoring and evaluation and of course, taught the system for the practical aspects of strategic planning and the tools of strategic planning. It was not how to come up with the policies and the strategies, overall; it focused on the ways to take those policies and strategies make them realistic, using necessary and sufficient criteria, which is built into that system. Is each part of it necessary? And is it together sufficient to achieve what you say you're going to achieve? Which makes it— you have a fighting chance when you do your monitoring and evaluation of having it achieve what you said. My favorite example of a program not being sufficient was for a procurement for five million dollars in Jordan. And the impact variable was peace.

Q: Peace?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I'm kind of like, okay, who's going to take a job for five million dollars to achieve peace in the Middle East? Talk about not sufficient, but that's an aside. That's when I first worked for RAND, which I have done a bunch since. But that's later. I did a couple of small things. I got hired by the Department of State to do a training of these planning, monitoring and evaluation approaches for their China programs. That was somewhere between 2007 and 2011. I was known to the China people because of the EUR/ACE work. So they came to me, and I did a half day of training. And then a couple of their grantees hired me. I worked for ABA [American Bar Association] rule of law program a couple of times. They had a program in Beijing and that is the only trip I've ever had to China. But the ABA China program hired me to go to China for four days. And I'm like, "Okay, this may be the only time I get to China. Could you please book the hotel room for four more and I'll pay for the hotel room?" Oh, it was great. I got to go to the Great Wall. It was really fun. I did other jobs for ABA Rule of Law Initiative but when their staff came to DC. Later, the Vermont Law School China environmental law program hired me to advise them and I flew to Vermont.

Q: But in the four days in Beijing, you were actually working? What did they want you to do?

CLAPP-WINCEK: This is a small USAID grant program. The director of their grant, had been in Washington in the training that I had given for the Department of State on how you set up monitoring evaluation to be realistic and achievable. She wanted me to come out and train her staff. So I did. We worked through the logic of their program in terms of necessary and sufficient criteria. We created a logic model.

Q: But did they have a large staff? There were about eight people in the room. Mostly Chinese?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Mostly Chinese. And guess what? Most of them did not know that they were working for the Department of State. She hadn't told me that. Because when

you do policy and strategy, you have to situate it in the bureaucratic environment. I mean, if you're a small USAID grant, you need to understand what are the USAID policies that you're in the context of? I had said something in Beijing about this being a U.S. State Department grant. And she said, they probably mostly figured it out— I felt really badly. But it never occurred to me that she wouldn't have told her staff.

Q: Well, who did they think they were working for?

CLAPP-WINCEK: It wasn't completely clear to me.

Q: You didn't go back to China for the University of Vermont?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Oh, sorry. So the University of Vermont had an environmental law program in China. So I flew up. This was the University of Vermont, in some small town in Vermont.

Q: Burlington.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I don't think they're in Burlington [Transcriber note: it is in Royalton, Vermont]. Anyway, there was a huge snowstorm and I got there late. Fortunately, I know how to drive in snow having grown up in Minnesota, but still, the plane was late. And so the same, half a dozen maybe as many as ten people in the room. And I redid the training that I had done at the Department of State for all the China grantees. And then I just worked them through their logic model. And what was interesting about that is, they were supposed to solve all the environmental programs in China for a grant that was maybe a million bucks. And so we went through, and we did the whole strategic planning if-then logic but then looked at what they could really focus on. The other thing that I did with them is because we had indicators for all kinds of stuff, and I said, "Okay, with your staff, no way, you're going to be able to collect all this data. We're going to pick the twelve indicators that you think are the most important to give you some sense of how you're doing -- because you're being asked for an unreasonable task. So what are the maybe ten indicators? And you're going to do a good job of tracking those" And I had never done that quite so explicitly with a client before where it was just to say, okay, you don't have a fighting chance. How are we going to deal with that?

Q: Really?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I have no idea. I've never seen those people again. Let's see, oh, Millennium Challenge Corporation. Around my second USAID job, 2011 to 2015, I had a cottage industry of reviewing other development assistance agencies' monitoring and evaluation policies. I would get hired for a couple of days to go through their monitoring and evaluation policies and edit and advise. I did Millennium Challenge Corporation. I did BIAD, Inter American Development Bank. Because the client was a Spanish speaker. He always referred to it as the BIAD. And it's so funny that that's what lodged in my brain as I tried to talk about it. I did that for him when he was at that bank, and then he took the job of monitoring and evaluation at the Millennium Challenge Corporation. I did

Millennium Challenge Corporation under two different directors. I did one for him. And then a new director came in and I did another one for her. I can't remember who else I did those for— oh, and the other thing that I left off from that timeframe was I did part time work, but for about a year for the Partnership to Cut Hunger and Poverty in Africa. And that was my buddy Emmy Simmons and her buddy Julie Howard. Julie Howard was running this NGO Partnership to Cut Hunger and Poverty in Africa. They were having their annual or biannual conference, and that year, they were going to focus on monitoring and evaluation. And so they had me create a working group, and do all kinds of interviews and bring people in. This was in the Feed the Future era. Feed the Future was a joint partnership between State, USAID, and Millennium Challenge Corporation. We were bringing in people from those and talking about monitoring and evaluation, and then I did a presentation at the conference based on the work of this whole group.. I was happy with that presentation. I think those are the most important ones. No, all the other ones that are on here. I think all the other ones that are on here are post my second stint at USAID.

Q: Okay, well, this is a very good point to stop. It's about two hours. And we will resume our conversation and it'll be for your period at AID beginning in 2011, or whenever exactly that is. And that will be an interesting way to transit into the difference between being a consultant to AID and to many other agencies and actually being caught up in the bureaucracy. But this time with a position that maybe you actually found to be exactly what you wanted to do. But we'll see. So, thank you. This has been a very enlightening session, we have been covering lots and lots of territory.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yes and sorry it's so chaotic. But you're trying to tell the story arc from one evaluation to another, but it hops around in time, right. I mean. I was in USAID, then I was a consultant. I was in State Department. Then I was a consultant. I was in USAID. And now I'm a consultant again, and that's—I had a very variable career. I apologize for the chaos.

Q: Do not be apologetic. I mean, that's what your career has been. And you have been learning all along even as you've been teaching and evaluating and assessing and doing all the various things you do.

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Q: Okay, here we are. And it is the new year 2023, January 3. I am delighted once again to be with Cynthia Clapp-Wincek. I'd have to always get your hyphenated name in the right order. And when we left off a couple of weeks ago, we were talking about this widely varied career you had with consultancies for all and sundry, but that you were carrying forth your expertise and evaluation and getting organizations to pay attention to the results of their work and how they should do it. You described it, I think, as being a very variable career, and well, it was a fascinating career, but this career was not over. We're now at about 2011. According to your resume, you then rejoined AID [United States Agency for International Development]. My question starting off this session is, how was it that you came back into AID after twenty years away something like that?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Almost to the week.

Q: But that was not the cause of your coming back, that you wanted to enjoy the anniversary of that. How did you come back into AID? And what was it that you were coming back into AID to do?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I talked about the 2003 evaluation of USAID's evaluation system that Richard Blue, and I wrote. Then as we were coming up to the 2008 election, everybody was talking about how we need this kind of change in foreign assistance. And we need that kind of change in foreign assistance. And all the big think tanks were putting out stuff and towards the end of the post, they would all say, we should do better monitoring and evaluation. And that's all they would say on the topic. We should do better monitoring and evaluation. So Richard and I agreed that we have a pretty good sense of what that means and what that would take. We decided to re-evaluate USAID's evaluation system. But this time we were, well as we went through, we shifted more into a lobbying mode, but we started out with the same kind of unbalanced evaluation. How's it doing? What's working, what's not working, we were updating from the earlier paper.

Q: To whom were you doing this?

CLAPP-WINCEK: We went to CDIE [Center for Development Information and Evaluation] and tried to talk them into refunding us, but they wouldn't pay for the field work.

Q: This is CDIE in USAID.

CLAPP-WINCEK: So no, I lied. CDIE no longer existed in 2008. In 2008, Gerry Britan was in the little evaluation unit in the Management Bureau at USAID. In the policy shop in the Management Bureau, there was a little evaluation unit, and he must have been there in 2008.

Q: This was not in the equivalent of PPC [Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination] or this was in the Management Bureau where the evaluation function existed at that time.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yes, because in 2005 or 2006, USAID lost PPC. It shifted a lot of the PPC staff over to F. They sent one or two of the evaluators over to F. But they worked more on creating that common set of indicators than evaluation. But remaining in USAID there was a function they put in the management bureau. But I went back to Gerry Britan, who was doing the evaluation function at USAID and tried to convince him to fund us, but he wouldn't fund the travel. And he started kind of putting some restrictions and we said, forget it and we self funded. Okay, I will not do that again. Richard and each had a six-month level of effort that we were not funded for. And it was hard and it was not as good a study. It wasn't as solid a study. Gerry had also said that he was going to send out a questionnaire to the missions which caused us to shift our focus and we sent questionnaires to USAID's contractors. Not so many of them were willing to answer and

comment on USAID. I think they didn't trust that it wouldn't get back to USAID and they wouldn't have reputational risk. That wasn't actually as good a study as the first one. It wasn't so bad. We did a bazillion interviews and stuff, but it was not as strong.

Q: Was it published?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Then what we did was something called a policy brief; define published. It was not published in a journal. And actually, I cannot find it on the internet anymore. So at some point, I have to dig through all my little thumb drives and find a copy of it. And they don't seem to have saved it in the DEC. I can't seem to find it in the DEC anymore. What I can find is the 2009 policy brief we did, which was basically the lobbying piece in which we made recommendations. And we said, okay, this is what USAID, and to some degree, MCC [Millennium Challenge Corporation] and State Department should do. And we kibitzed because my contracting, like my consulting work, in the late 2000 kind of eight, nine period, I did a lot of conflict work, I did a fair amount of work with what became CSO with the state department, which is the Center for Stability Operations [Cynthia means The Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations], it had been CRS, reconstruction and stabilization [Cynthia means Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization], and it became CSO. And I've done a bunch of consulting for them. And from that vantage point, we kibitzed on security cooperation evaluation.

And the main points on MCC were that they were only doing impact evaluation, and that they needed to do more complete monitoring and evaluation systems for their complex programs and that only impact evaluations were insufficient. And I was vindicated on that point, which I will probably talk about, because it's one of those sore points where it's like I was right about that, and you should have listened to me when we put that damn policy brief out in 2009. And so we put out this paper. And around this time, Ruth Levine is at the Center for Global Development. And she's a big proponent of impact evaluations. And she'd come out of the education sector. And she was writing a study called “When Will They Ever Learn?”, which was saying that more impact evaluation should be done in order to understand what approaches work in education, particularly girls education, which was her focus… but more impact evaluation should be done because we needed that more solid research type evidence on the mechanisms and the approaches that we used. I do think an impact evaluation is a good tool for certain things, but it is not the only approach. A classic impact evaluation will tell you one thing. This is what MCC was doing, they were doing the equivalent of a randomized control trial on their impact variable, which is a variable on income, and I can't tell you any more precisely which version of income that they were using. I used to be able to cite the differences, and I can't do that anymore. And it basically just told you did they achieve that or did they not? I may as well jump a little bit forward, what happened is that they took all of their agriculture impact evaluations, they looked at them and they found out that they had zero effect on that income variable. Now, they did have effects on all kinds of things, which I thought looked pretty positive. But on that one variable, which was the standard they had set for themselves, there was no measurable change. The part that was nearly criminal was that they couldn't explain why they had not had the planned effects.

Their monitoring and evaluation systems were not strong enough to answer the question of why not? I mean, they spent five billion dollars and they couldn't really do a good explanation of why change did or didn't occur.

Q: Did they try to do it anyway? Or did they–

CLAPP-WINCEK: There were pieces of it that they could speak to. And they finished that work. And guess what, what did they say? And now we're in like 2012 because I was at USAID. I will come back to that in a second. I'm sorry, but I actually got invited to a briefing they did at USAID and I thought it quite interesting that they hadn't invited me themselves. I was very polite in the meeting, if I do say so myself. There were people in that room that I had lobbied after our 2009 study to say you need to do this better. And so then he gets to the briefing, and he gets to the part where he says we need to do more complete monitoring and evaluation systems and he wouldn't look at me. All I said was alright, I think you need to hold your heads up here (because they were very chagrined) about the excellent evaluation work you did do. There's a bunch of stuff they knew (these are smart people) but you know–

Q: Remind me as to when the MCC actually started though. I mean, it couldn't have been too long before that. Was MCC formed in 2003 or something like that?

CLAPP-WINCEK: When I worked for Carlos Pascual in 2004-2005, at EUR/ACE, he and I went over and met with that first head of MCC. I must have been in 2003, or 2004.

Q: Okay, so it was still in the early years, and they were still trying to feel their way around. What I've thought-

CLAPP-WINCEK: Well they'd spent five billion dollars by then.

Q: But they couldn't spend all the money they were getting, I think, and that was they had set targets for what they wanted to spend and they were far below that, because they couldn't get these contracts worked out with countries. But anyway, that's a separate subject. What I find remarkable, if you don't mind my saying so, is that you and your colleague–

CLAPP-WINCEK: Richard?

Q: Yes, absolutely, Richard Blue, that you did all this kind of pro bono. I mean, you did it because you thought it was important. And you actually, I mean, you spent six months working on this kind of labor of love. That's not the kind of thing that most people would do and I think that's remarkable and you want to feel good about that. I mean, you may sense that you did not do as good a job as you might have done if you were able to travel or do other things. But nevertheless, I want to highlight that, even if you don't highlight it, that's something that most people would not have done.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I must say, it's actually one of the things I'm proud of. I will always talk about evaluation methods because that's my profession. But no, it is one of the things I'm proudest of. And then what happens? So Ruth Levine is working on this impact evaluation stuff, arguing for more impact evaluations.

Q: She was at CGD at the time?

CLAPP-WINCEK: She was. And she puts out this study and when they posted it to the CGD website, there's a comment area below. So I started commenting that I understand what you're doing, but you have to understand you're doing a research version of evaluation, you are not doing a programmatic version of evaluation, and they are different. And I understand impact evaluation as a very strong tool in that research world, but it is not as strong a tool as we showed in this policy brief. So now we're into 2010 and she called me. We had coffee and then she offered me a job, but it took from 2010 until April or May of 2011 to actually start work at USIAD.

USAID/Policy Bureau, Director, Office of Learning, Evaluation and Research, 2011 - 2014

Q: She left. She was at CGD [Center for Global Development], and then she came into AID for a year.

CLAPP-WINCEK: From 2010 to 2011.

Q: But she left in May of 2011 and you arrived in April?

CLAPP-WINCEK: We overlapped. I think they managed to figure out how to hire me when they realized she was leaving. And they suddenly had a hole in evaluation. She was double headed as kind of head of evaluation but a DAA [Deputy Assistant Administrator]. So they finally figured out how to hire me. I overlapped with her for two weeks and then I went to Italy with my husband for a two week vacation, which I told them was non-negotiable. And then I went back and she and I overlapped for one day and then she was gone.

Q: But she was the one who initiated your hiring, right?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Oh, absolutely. Without a doubt. Because of the policy brief. So my six month investment paid off pretty well.

Q: And very worthwhile for AID too. But she, as you say, had been a deputy assistant administrator. But you were brought in as a department director?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Office head which reported to the DAA.

Q: Office head.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Which was fine for me. I was the head of the Office of Learning Evaluation and Research. And when I found out she was leaving, which by the way, this being a small town, I found out six months before she told me. I had found out that her husband got a job in California and that she'd be moving out to California because of it.

Q: But she only signed on to AID for a year essentially, right?

CLAPP-WINCEK: No, I think she signed on for a longer period of time. And then he'd been in Baltimore and then he got the job as the dean of the Stanford Medical School, I mean some really big deal job.

Q: So she had to go, right?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Well, she couldn't commute across the country, but I mean, they had a twelve year old daughter, and so she went.

Q: Okay, so there you are and she's gone. And what did this job entail? And how was it?

CLAPP-WINCEK: There are a couple of factors. So when we found out she wasn't going to be there, I almost turned the job down. You need senior Agency leadership for evaluation to work. Every review you read of evaluation systems around the world will say the same thing. Every organization has too many priorities, and if somebody's not making evaluation slash monitoring, one or two of those priorities, forget it, it becomes a paper exercise. So with her leaving, and she was very tight with Raj Shah because they'd worked together at the Gates Foundation. At this point Raj Shah is the administrator of AID, and a big proponent of impact evaluation and a medical doctor. So without her there as a connector, is this going to work? When I took the job in the spring, I wasn't sure I was going to make it through the summer, because I wasn't sure that that commitment would continue. But that senior leadership commitment strongly continued.
I had to walk kind of a fine line on this impact evaluation thing. I mean, this is an ongoing theme in the evaluation world for twenty some years, maybe thirty. One of the questions I asked Ruth Levine, in that brief period of overlap, is I said, okay, Ruth, you've been at USAID for a year, what percentage of USAIDs evaluations do you think should be impact evaluation? She sat there and she thought for about a minute and a half. And I just waited. And she said, maybe 10 percent. So here's this woman who has been championing impact evaluation and even she had to acknowledge only 10 percent of USAID evaluation should be impact evaluation because it's a very precise tool. And USAID needs a lot more than that. I mean, if ever there was a poster child for impact evaluation's limitations, MCC was the poster child. I mean, you need more. It's one important tool. It's just one tool. So I had to walk a very fine line with Raj. She must have briefed him. I mean, he must have known what he was getting into, because he never challenged me on it. And so he was doing a whole USAID Forward initiative where he had a leadership team and the issues he cared about. One of them was evaluation. I was on this USAID forward leadership team–

Q: Who was the Assistant Administrator for PPL [Planning, Policy, and Learning]. Was it PPL by that time?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Oh, PPL. A USAID policy bureau was reconstituted in 2010 as PPL the Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning. The budget office was reconstituted as a separate office because Mike Casella refused to come over. He'd been at OMB [Office of Management and Budget] . I don't know if you remember him, because I'm sure you actually must have dealt with him.

Q: No, because that was long after my time.

CLAPP-WINCEK: He had been at OMB. This guy is slightly younger than I am and I mean, he'd been at OMB the whole time and he'd done foreign assistance the whole time. I mean, he really does go way back.

Q: Some of us go back further than way, way back. You see, that's the-

CLAPP-WINCEK: I know, but you I actually overlapped with you. You were like one of my role models.

Q: So PPL by that time–

CLAPP-WINCEK: He came in and took the budget job. Who was the first head of PPL that I dealt with? Larry Garber helped create PPL and he was acting for a period of time. And so I met with Larry Garber. And then there was somebody else there who was there for a short period of time who didn't really come from the USAID world who came and went. I see his name on LinkedIn from time to time, he wasn't there very long. So Garber left when they wouldn't give him the job. He went over to DCHA i.e. the Bureau with the DG, the people conflict, etc; he went over there.

Q: It's okay. I just wondered, you're talking about Raj Shah as being the person who was most focused on impact evaluations and evaluation as a general principle and as a part of the USAID Forward, and I just wondered if you were dealing with him directly?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yes

Q: Okay. So you were dealing with him more or less directly.

CLAPP-WINCEK: He was giving me almost more money than I could deal with. So Ruth Levine, we need to back up again to 2010, Ruth Levine came in and got a new USAID Evaluation Policy written. It was a very elegant document. It oversold impact evaluation: it created two types of evaluation, which now you will hear everybody in the world talk about totally spurious. There were impact evaluations and performance evaluations. She said she got that language from Winston Allen who was the senior evaluation advisor.

Q: Winston Allen?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Winston Allen, yeah.

Q: Who was Winston Allen?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Winston Allen was hired before I got there. And I think she hired Winston. He got hired as the senior evaluator, GS [General Schedule] fifteen senior evaluator. And so Ruth had a little evaluation crowd of five people, one of which was Gerry Britan. He got transferred from that Management Bureau back, but it was very clear he was retiring. He retired before I got there, or I overlapped with him for three weeks. I mean, he and I go way back. And it was very clear, he was retiring. And we're good buddies, but I'm sure he also didn't want to work for me, which I don't take personally. It's sort of like, he's the head of a huge CDIE and now he's going to work for me in a newly reconstituted evaluation office? He and I still have lunch every six months. Winston was one of the other folks in that new little office. And there were just a couple of other people. It was down to four. So when I really started, there were four people and me.

And Ruth had created this elegant evaluation policy, which had two methodological mistakes in it, which we did correct as we shifted the policy guidance into the ADS. I mean, one of the methodological mistakes was that you would do an impact evaluation on every innovation. Now, what do we know about innovation? You need to be flexible, you need to throw out what's not working and shift it and try something new. I mean, that's how innovation works. When you do an impact evaluation, you have to hold everything constant. Those are antithetical concepts, so we shifted the policy guidance to say you must do an impact evaluation of every innovation that you are taking to scale. So that you would have a period of time where you would test that innovation through an impact evaluation before you took it to scale. I thought that was kind of a clever way to not throw out the thing that was wrong.

Q: Did that actually get implemented that way?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yes. Oh, yeah, it did, because it went into the ADS, which became the formal policy.

Q: But in practice, how many projects were being taken to scale?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Oh, well, okay. That's Larry Cooley. Do an oral history with Larry Cooley. He has this incredible shtick on scale. I'm not going there.
The other mistake in the evaluation policy was that it implied every project or activity should have an impact evaluation; when even Ruth Levine admitted only 10 percent should. You asked what I was brought in for, I was brought in to implement a new evaluation policy. I corrected those. One was a mistake, the other one was an error of communication.

Q: When you-let me see if I phrase this properly. I mean, you've got this policy that has been promulgated, right?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yeah.

Q: Before you got there it had been promulgated. Has there been time for really working this through with the staff?

CLAPP-WINCEK: No, that was my job.

Q: Okay, but as this policy was developed, it was developed in Ruth Levine's backyard. I mean, this was a Ruth Levine product with the help of Winston or whoever you were talking about.

CLAPP-WINCEK: With the help of Winston, Elizabeth Roen, and a couple of people in the policy shop in PPL. At that time, PPL had that small learning evaluation and research function of four people, but they had a bigger policy group. So, Ruth also worked with these policy folks. I felt confident that she had a lot to do with the writing of it, although as did Elizabeth Roen, but neither one of them knew evaluation that well. Winston knew certain things about evaluation. And there are certain areas where he's really good, but he had been a USAID contractor. So one of the things that Raj Shah loved to say is that, the whole point of the evaluation policy was to stop doing the "2-2-s evaluations". Two evaluators, two weeks in the field, and two dozen interviews, although I think I said the other day that the third one was sometimes a variant of two dozen interviews, but he called them 2-2-2s. Well, that's what Winston's career had been, is carrying out 2-2-2s, working for different consulting firms and NGOs. That's what he had done. And I mean, the man has a PhD from UPenn. It's just that he wasn't studying evaluation at UPenn. I spent forty plus years immersing myself in evaluation methods, and what works around the world in a way that he had not. He'd been just a more working evaluator.

Q: That's what I'm trying to get at in terms of how this policy was created. I mean, that you would normally think that it would be designed by people who had long experience in this subject working with development, and that working in development is different from working in medicine or in aeronautics, or whatever it might be. So, I'm just wondering, does this cast some doubt on the policy making procedures in AID at that time? I mean, you're being brought in to implement this policy and–

CLAPP-WINCEK: Richard and I thought, because we'd written the whole piece.

Q: Was this written with your work at the basis of it? Or was it written as a kind of intellectual exercise about what evaluation is and why it's more important than that kind of thing? I mean, because this leads to the question of whether you, in implementing this, had to make a lot of decisions about direction that reflected more your understanding than what the words on the piece of paper said, I mean, that's what I'm really getting at. Because it's one thing to be in charge of putting together the policy and working on it for three years, or whatever it is, as a lot of things are in AID, but this is the most kind of

operational thing. As people like John Erickson and other economists, I had to do what the New Directions Policy meant, where you're taking something that was created on Capitol Hill with a little bit of involvement from other people and then trying to create that as a policy for AID. But there's nothing that's more basic about working through questions as does a project or program work or does it not work? And what does that mean? I'm asking, does the policy require you to make a lot of amendments in the process?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Let me answer, I have two things to say. And addressing that directly is the second one, but it will lead me into more things. Can I make one observation before I do that?

Q: Of course.

CLAPP-WINCEK: It has been my experience that administrations are very interested in evaluation at the end of their terms and not the beginning by and large, right? Because they know that the people before them did everything wrong. And so they come in with new policies because they know that they've got the right idea of how this works. That policy office in eighteen months put out at least nine different policies, of which one was the evaluation policy. I mean, they were just chunking it through, and they put out a lot of policies.

I consider the evaluation policy very elegant, and partially because although I did have to, I never successfully fully overcame that impact evaluation thing. I mean, as soon as I left, they reverted to impact evaluation, because nobody who worked for me knew evaluation enough to know any better, they just went with the political winds. But one of the things I liked about the policy is, (and I am very opinionated having spent my career figuring out particularly how USAID monitoring and evaluation work) it left me scope to push things the way I wanted to push them. And Raj gave me lots of money. At the height, I had nineteen million dollars a year and twenty employees. My understanding is that my job is to implement the evaluation policy, and therefore that's to rebuild the evaluation system. We were investing heavily in training, we were working with USAID regional bureaus to try to get people to ramp up doing evaluations.

The first year, I gave away four million bucks. We had a competition, people had to send in an evaluation scope of work, then people on my staff and from the regional bureaus judged the scopes of work and determined the best one. Then we would fund evaluations.

Q: You funded evaluations? You funded training of evaluation officers?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Right, we did do that. But the competition was simply so that USAID missions could get funding to do evaluations. And we kept saying, this is a one time deal. You are supposed to be funding your evaluations according to the guidance in the Automated Directives System [ADS]. Your ADS says every project. This is something that they did change based on the 2009 study that Richard and I did. One of the things

that we said is, if there is no line item in a project budget for monitoring and evaluation, it won't be done well, because that money will always be poached for some higher priority. You must have a line item. And so we were like, okay, you've got a line item in there, you're supposed to be spending that money on monitoring and evaluation. But we realized there's been no attention to monitoring and evaluation for some period of time. No with this competition, just this one time, we're going to provide you money. But this is with the expectation that next year, you can put money into your budgets to be able to do monitoring and evaluation according to the ADS guidance.
PPL hated that I gave the money away because that money meant it shifted PPLs budget to the regional bureaus, and they told me I could never do it again. I kept saying, we do not have staff in LER who know how to run evaluations except for Winston with some limitations. People who can write thoughtful evaluation scopes of work, scan the different kinds of methods. I had a second GS fifteen position, and I hired Tanya Alfonso, who's a very good impact evaluator, and she's still there, but I had to hire an impact evaluator. That's the way Ruth had set it up. She hired Winston, who's a really good general evaluator, and in some ways, a thoughtful guy. Whereas Tanya, who'd been teaching evaluation at SAIS with Gerry Britan, had done well, but she has stayed in the impact evaluation mode. When I left, she was the one person who really understood methods and has pushed impact evaluation; sadly. It's not a bad thing, it's just that it left the rest of the evaluation more uncovered than I would have liked.

So in LER, the first thing we spent money on was ramping up the training budget. We recreated a new project to put monitoring and evaluation staff into missions, so that we would ramp up missions' monitoring and evaluation staffs.

Q: Did you find that some missions were particularly interested and particularly good at this and others paid no attention to it?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Always like anything else.

Q: Was there anything particular about the ones that were especially good? Did they mostly come out of Asia? Were there any characteristics that you identified as being particularly prevalent in some of those cases that were the most successful?

CLAPP-WINCEK: One of the things that happened is that I wasn't the day to day person. I had a team lead and that project was managed by somebody under the team lead. I'm off doing USAID Forward meetings, fighting with the personnel people trying to hire somebody with a PhD in evaluation, which they wouldn't let me do. Evaluation is not a job description in the federal government which believes that anybody in that program officer cone can be an evaluator. Which is like saying anybody in the program officer cone can be an economist. Evaluation is a specialized expertise, and they're treating it as if it's the old 2-2-2 evaluation world, where you didn't really need to know that much because everybody did the same thing every time.
We did have the competition, and awarded four million dollars for different people to do evaluations. Then, we ran a competition for the best evaluation reports afterwards. We've given them money to do evaluations and then we ran a competition for the best

evaluation reports. The prize for those who did the best evaluation reports was that they could brief Ra;j because Raj loved evaluations. But then I spent eighteen months trying to schedule that session. I used to sit in the USAID Forward meetings and as he would leave, I would say "we need to schedule that meeting" in front of his handlers and where the winners of the evaluation reports brief you and he says, "yeah, we really need to do that". They finally scheduled it and he told me to do multiple evaluations and so we did like eight—

Q: All at one time?

CLAPP-WINCEK: No, we were supposed to do monthly briefings for eight months. Finally, I just brought them all in because I had been promising these people for eighteen months. I brought them all in and we were in the big PPL conference room and two things happened. One, I did not bring in the team from Zambia, because they kept scheduling it and moving it and I was not going to pay money to fly a team from Zambia to the United States and then have it scheduled. Fortunately, I'd read that evaluation. Raj started twenty minutes late. He looked at each of the eight evaluations and had a very knowledgeable, thoughtful question for every evaluation team.

Q: Had he actually read them?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I don't know if he'd read the whole thing, but he absorbed enough that he could pick up on what the key issue was and he could ask the team. And of course, the Zambia team wasn't there so he asked me. Oh, thank God, I could answer it!

Q: That's very interesting, he actually paid attention to them. What happened as a result of that? Did the agency take advantage of these? Did it change the policy or the practice of the agency?

CLAPP-WINCEK: One of the evaluations had an effect even before we did the briefing. There is one instance where they were in Tanzania and they had set up two small impact evaluations but had to shut them both down. One because copper prices went up, so all the people who were involved in the project left to work in the copper mines. And in the other area, there was such a horrendous drought that there was no point running an impact evaluation because everybody knew that nothing was growing. The evaluators came out and quickly shut the evaluations down because they no longer fit the environment, the context had changed. That's the only one I know.
In terms of use of evaluations, we look every two years at how evaluations were used and the other year, we would go through all the evaluations for that period and score them in terms of quality. And you're scoring the report, which is different, by the way, from scoring the evaluation. But you're scoring the report. So that we did do—

Q: Wait a minute. Scoring the report means that this report was done according to the appropriate guidelines? What does scoring the report mean, and why is that important?

CLAPP-WINCEK: For scoring the report, first of all, you are checking; are people implementing the USAID evaluation policy? Are they doing these according to the policy? So yes, we definitely scored that; that's a piece of cake. The most important thing that we did is we scored whether you could trace through the findings, facts, and evidence, to the evaluator's conclusions and recommendations? That's an evidence based evaluation. You would be shocked at how often there will be a recommendation in a report that you can't figure out what facts they based it on. I have to admit, I have even written stuff, and had people go, "oh, where's the evidence for that recommendation" and I'm like, "Oh, darn" and then you go back, pull it out, and have to make it explicit. That's important and speaks to the one version of the quality of the evaluation more broadly, because then that evaluation is evidence based. You were also being scored on the degree to which they were looking at the methods. Now, of course, this is part of what's in that evaluation policy, such that the facts were really facts. That they had used methods that were systematic and removed bias, so you could trust the facts so that somebody could go out and talk to one farmer which could be generalized to the entire Tanzania.

Q: Okay, so you were there for three years. Was it your impression that all these efforts, that you were carrying out with the encouragement of Raj Shah and others, was having an impact on the staffing of AID? As a result of the Administrator's interest, did people in the regional bureaus actually pay attention to the importance of evaluation? Were they putting resources into it? Were the missions doing that?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Do I know if it continues to this day?

Q: I'm just asked during your—

CLAPP-WINCEK: It definitely did for at least several years. I could see people shifting resources. When the administrator makes a big hoopla out of something, everybody had to report how many evaluations they did. So, the missions started to make sure what they were doing and reporting on the evaluation.

Q: Were they distinguishing between impact evaluations and all other evaluations?

CLAPP-WINCEK: There were a handful of people in that system who could do that. The ones that I thought were the funniest were the several mission directors who came through the system when I did in '79 '80, when they were starting the Bennett impact evaluations, which do not meet the more modern definition of an impact evaluation -- this randomized control definition impact evaluation. In the Bennet days, they were simply evaluations of the impact. I got emails from two mission directors who said, "I don't care what you say about this randomized control trial thing, I know what an impact evaluation is, we are doing impact evaluation here. We are not using that method, because it is not helpful and I refuse to change my jargon". I had to say that I understood why they were cranky, but I'm sorry, the phrase impact evaluation has been hijacked.

Every two years, we were supposed to do a study on the quality of the evaluation reports. Let me say one thing there. And then I have to get to that second point. Part of the reason

I make that distinction is that I've learned over the years that you don't actually say the most sensitive stuff in the final report, you allude to it. It works better if you communicate it directly in person with the decision makers. Evaluation isn't supposed to be a gotcha exercise and you can build better trust with people. They will also listen to you more if they understand that this isn't a gotcha exercise. You're pointing things out to them that they need to act on. But then you can soften it so that their reputation doesn't suffer much. It's about learning and changing. And so the evaluation reports don't always have the most hard hitting stuff in them. And I'm fine with that. I don't care that much about the written record. You put in enough that people get the idea.

Q: Well, the whole point of the evaluations is that you learn from them and do things differently in the future, based on the findings. I think that's part of what is the problem for the State Department inspectors who lash out at AID in their work in Afghanistan or wherever. If evaluation can be adjusted and modulated as you describe it, then it potentially has much more impact, and people don't just revert to it.

CLAPP-WINCEK: That's the first use. One of the things that I always have trouble with is when people take all the evaluation reports from the last five years around the world, that are all done for specific projects with kind of specific things in mind and go through them to see what they learned. I am not very comfortable with that, because you're getting fruit salad. Is fruit salad a high enough standard to be making multimillion dollar decisions on? What you need to do is design a systematic series of evaluations that are comparable around the world, summarize that, and then use that to make decisions. The second use that I'm very uncomfortable with is that people define things differently.

Q: Had people done those kinds of disaggregated summations that you're describing? Does that happen?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Oh, yeah, all the time. But I have to say, I'm not so comfortable with that. It makes me nervous thinking about what kinds of decisions they're making.
I had set up that every two years we would look at the quality of evaluation reports, in the intervening year we were supposed to be running a meta evaluation which is an evaluation of the utilization of evaluations. By the time the first contract got submitted, I was gone. And I do know that my colleagues were not so happy with it. They've never repeated that. At least once Elizabeth Roen made sure that they repeated the one on the quality of the evaluation reports, but I don't think that they had done that every two years as I proposed. I can find nine studies, one that was done while I was there, and one that was done after I left, that basically Molly, or somebody using a very similar methodology have worked on that talk about the quality and quantity of evaluation reports that go back to '98? I was done before I left USAID the first time.
I wanted to have a systematic way to continue, where you would hold the basic criteria the same and see what was happening with the quality of the evaluation report over time. That's the only way to understand if you have systemic change. I still think we need to do more exploration of how you track the utilization of evaluation reports. It's a very hard thing to do.

The evaluation I'm about to begin is for the Bureau for Resilience, Environment, and Food Security [REFS]. We were trying to clarify some definitions for our scope of work, so I'm on the phone with somebody in that office and she goes, "Oh, you're the person who worked on the GDA evaluation in 2003". And I'm like, "Yes, I am". And she goes, "you advised that we not create incentive funds for public private partnerships. I'm being told to create an incentive fund". I am trying to use that evaluation to convince them not to do it.

Q: That's good. You should be very happy about that.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I was thrilled. But how do you pick that up? Do you know what I mean? How do you track that systematically over time over a long enough period of time?

Q: Well, how did this woman even know that your evaluation existed? She was looking for evaluations about public private partnerships? What was the-

CLAPP-WINCEK: She's responsible for public private partnerships in The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System [BRFSS]. And I didn't ask her how she found it. I didn't ask her. She goes, "Oh, yeah, but you were the 2003 one in USAID". I was like, "Oh, my God!"

Q: Well, that's good. It's very satisfying that your work has not completely gone into oblivion somewhere.

CLAPP-WINCEK: The other thing that gives me hope is that when I went back to USAID in 2011, two times people got into the elevator and said to me, " Oh, it's so good to see you. When I do a project, I always remember what you taught me about the objective tree back in the Africa Bureau".

Q: Well, listen, if you had ridden up and down the elevator more often, you would have discovered other people, right? I mean, that's quite a sample of two people in one elevator at the same time.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I would say that to my staff. When they would ask, "is this going to stay? Is this going to make any difference?" I used to say, "will it hold at this higher level after Raj goes, no, the budget is absolutely going to drop". There's a clear pattern in USAID going up and down and up and down for evaluations. I mean, you can track it in Molly's charts over the years. But it's about the people. That's why we invested so much in training. It's about who you've trained, and what they remember.

Q: You describe Raj as not being able to find time to meet with these people during most of your tenure there, despite being very strongly supportive of your work. Were there other pieces of evidence about his degree of interest in evaluation and its results?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Actually, interestingly, I was in probably another USAID Forward meeting with one of his senior people the next week. And the guy said to me, "that was a fantastic briefing, we need to do it again". I said, "Absolutely not". When I kept saying to him, "we need to schedule this briefing, we need to schedule this briefing" it took eighteen months. And he goes, "I know, I know, I should have talked to the scheduler". But at least he indicated that Raj was interested and appreciated the briefing.

Q: I don't understand how you run an organization where the schedulers determine the policy.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I know what you mean. The other thing I will say about Raj is that he had a lot of priorities. He was really big on innovation.

Q: He created a lot of initiatives and it was hard for the staff to keep up.

CLAPP-WINCEK: So I should talk about Susan Reichle, who was the assistant administrator for the last two years I was in PPL. She was a big supporter, but she basically stayed out of my way, because she would almost say, "okay, you've got it". Now there were two problems in the last year. Do you want to get to that? Or was there something—

Q: No, according to your resume, you changed your job and you became an advisor on construction assessment.

CLAPP-WINCEK: We're not there yet, I'm sorry.

Q: No, go ahead.

CLAPP-WINCEK: What happened with the LER job is that they wanted LER to be like the old CDIE and start conducting evaluations. The first thing that happened is I got a one point three million dollar earmark for basic education. I was at odds with the PPL leadership, I kept saying, "you guys, I don't have staff to run evaluations like this. You have technical bureaus, full of people with that expertise. We need to partner with them. You need somebody with expertise. We will try to find somebody with enough understanding of evaluation methods to pair with them to be able to write a scope of work". But they wanted it to come out of CDIE like the old days. CDIE was pulling in all kinds of IPAs for people with technical expertise. I mean, the personnel system is not what it once was.

And so I got a one point three million dollar earmark for an education evaluation and the Education Office refused to partner with us. And I'm like, What do you mean, you won't partner with us? And they said, "We don't have staff". It's like you do understand, we're going to have to do an evaluation without you. I have to spend one point three million dollars, what do you think I'm going to do? I mean you know me. I'm a little blunt. I tried to get support from PPL leadership, but I didn't get very far because at this point, I'm reporting to Larry Garber, which is a whole sad saga in and of itself. The idea was

that for a period of time, I had to have Tjip Walker as my deputy. That first year that he was my deputy, I thought we had a great partnership, but then he got himself transferred away. Although he's still encumbering my deputy position, as I'm ramping up to twenty staff that I have to write personnel evaluations on and stuff, he got himself transferred away for a year, but didn't come back for my last year either. Before I left, they finally kicked him out of his office because he hadn't been acting as a deputy for a year and a half and didn't want to go back to being a deputy. So, they promoted Melissa Patsalides to be my deputy. But the scope for the education evaluation was his idea. I mean, this is a brilliant guy who was all about systems thinking. Do you know about the Cynefin framework?

Q: No, I don't know about that.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Simple, complicated, complex and chaotic. Tjip was all about this stuff and he kept saying, "we are treating development programs as if they are just complicated as if we're building bicycles. We are not building bicycles. We are in complex systems where you cannot predict ahead of time what's going to happen, we need to use different tools for planning". He is, of course, absolutely right about that. So, they let him create a whole complexity conference, which was fascinating. He brought in brilliant people. That's when he got himself detailed away and then I thought he was coming back to be my deputy. I thought losing him for a year was for a good cause, but he never came back.

Anyways, what he said was, "okay, if you have to do this education evaluation, use systems approaches". I had hired, on contract, somebody who knew systems approaches to evaluation and she ended up creating this fascinating systems approach that then got contracted out to somebody else that I knew. Sadly, after I left there, the people in LER who managed the evaluation didn't understand systems approaches to evaluation enough, so they ended up going back to treating this if it was complicated and not complex. They couldn't capture sustainability because of the way they did it. So, that was one evaluation with a sad story.

The other one was when they insisted that we do an evaluation of USAID's poverty programs and I kept saying, USAID hasn't been a poverty organization for like ten years. Half the budget is health. I mean, what you actually spend on economic growth is a smidge. We know a healthy populace has an effect on poverty, but that correlation is not strong enough to be picked up in an evaluation, and you already know that from other kinds of studies. So, I'm talking to the policy shop guys who are responsible for whatever Raj's policy was on poverty, and they were smart enough to understand where I was coming from. I mean, one guy looked sick to his stomach when I said that he knew exactly what I meant. I don't understand why we're going to waste money on this evaluation, because it's tiny and not helpful.

So what I finally did was that, in desperation, I went to Larry Cooley, who I really trust, because PPL was making me spend three million bucks on it. AI told Larry, "Okay, I need help", because he is a really smart, talented man. Actually, first I had Winston

writing a scope of work but he couldn't get the causality right. They wanted a poverty evaluation and he kept writing how poverty programs affect health. And I'm like, "No, the outcome is supposed to be poverty, not health". Then, I went to Gerry Wolgin, one of the smartest economists I know and a good friend. Do you know him from the bank?

Q: I know him mostly from the history of AID work that we've done. I did not know him when he worked in either organization.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Oh, that's funny. I worked with him in the African Bureau before he went over to World Bank. He's such a lovely man. He came back as a contractor after he retired and I told him, "Gerry, I really need help. I need somebody to review the scope of work that I trust. You understand enough about the evaluation work". When he was in the Africa Bureau, I helped him set up an evaluation for the non-project agreements. It's the non sectoral lending that World Bank did way better than USAID because they had deeper pockets. This goes back to—

Q: Kind of program lending.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I helped him set up an evaluation. He did have USAID programs to do that, because he was convinced that that was the right way to go. And so now in PPL, I asked Gerry to review the scopes of work being drafted. He had many conversations about evaluations and methods and about "what you're trying to accomplish?" And I'm like, "can you look at the scope of work?" And so he commented on it extensively. I then gave it back to Winston and then sent it back to Gerry, who comments on it extensively. I mean, after a couple of times, Winston should have been able to understand what Gerry was saying, and he really couldn't. It was a terrible scope of work. I didn't have time to try and stop and learn enough to fix it myself. And I shouldn't have to, do you know what I mean? I could have faked it, because of all my years of doing evaluation, but it wouldn't have been appropriate. Because I'm not an economist, I don't really know. And so after 3-4 rounds, Gerry would just send back these emails, "No". I thought, "Okay, we gotta stop doing this, it's not getting us anywhere". And Gerry, wouldn't take responsibility for it on his own even when I begged him to. That's when I went to Larry Cooley. I'm like, okay, "Larry Cooley, I need help, there needs to be a way to do this". And sadly, it went from Larry Cooley to Molly, who gave it to some of MSI's newly hired impact evaluation people. She gave it to them, totally misguided.

By this point, in my last six months in LER, Patricia Rader, who's an old friend, was the Deputy Assistant to the Administrator [DAA] that I reported to. And I'm like, "Patricia, this is a waste of money". And I could explain to her why and she was smart enough to understand it. And so after I left, she got them to take the money back from Management Systems International [MSI]. Molly is good at a lot of things, but they should have gone with Larry because although he gave Molly a plan to implement, she thought she knew better and it went off the rails. But at least they only ended up wasting one point five million dollars.

Q: They never actually carried this out, presumably for political purposes. They requested that they wanted to be able to demonstrate that AID had reduced the number of people living in poverty by x percentage, or whatever it was in your evaluation which was going to prove that?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Which it clearly was not.

Q: It's interesting that they finally came around to that point of view, but you're right, people like Gerry Wolgin and Patricia Rader are very smart.

CLAPP-WINCEK: MSI people are good, but this had gone off the rails. I'm sure they got some report for the one point five million dollars from MSI, but I could never bear to read it, so I don't know.

Q: Looking back on these, how many years were you there?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Three.

Q: Do you look back on this and feel a sense of accomplishment? Why did you leave?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Because the year before that, Larry Garber announced to me that I was in an FSL position. And Larry—

Q: An FSL?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Foreign Service Limited.

Q: I always thought FSLs are local hires, but that's FSNs. So, you were not a GS employee, even though you were employed here. Anyways, you were in FSL and—

CLAPP-WINCEK: And they had told me that it was a three-year term, which by the way, I had forgotten because I wasn't sure if I was going to make it through the summer without Ruth Levine there. I'd been there two years working eleven hours, six days a week, because I really cared and this was my chance. And then, Larry Garber told me that they were posting my position to the Foreign Service bid list. If a Foreign Service Officer bid on it, I was done. I knew that when they created the bureau, they had committed that they would put a Foreign Service officer in that position if somebody bid on it.

Q: Even though there are practically no people in the Foreign Services who know anything about this subject?

CLAPP-WINCEK: The woman who came in only lasted six months, and it was such a disaster they moved her. Then, the acting office director asked me, in the hallway at the American Evaluation Association conference, if I would come back, but I don't know

how serious that was. Although, in retrospect, I realize she was probably more serious than I realized. But also, I had been quite angry at how summarily they set me aside.

Q: I can imagine you would be.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I'd been killing myself for two years and they're like, "No, we don't really need somebody who has your background and commitment because Foreign Service Officers need office director positions when they come back to Washington".

Q: I realized that you said there was no category for evaluation officers and that impeded you being able to hire people. But, the idea that they thought a foreign service person could fill this kind of position with this kind of skill, is mind boggling. Anyways, so, you finished your term and that was it?

CLAPP-WINCEK: So he told me that when they put out the bid list in the Spring. By October, I was told somebody had bid and that she was coming the following October. So I stopped working eleven hours a day, six days a week. If they don't value me more highly than that, I'm not going to exhaust myself. The other thing that happened by the following spring was that I started second guessing myself; which started to make me uncomfortable. I thought, "should I start this? Would she do this? Does she think this is a priority?" I started questioning myself.

And then I had lunch with Kevin Brownell, who was one of the USAID Forward folks, and we used to compare notes all the time. He had a completely different role on USAID Forward. And I knew him well enough that he knew how unhappy I was. By the way, I would have been angry about it, but they also did it to the guy who was the head of PPL's strategic planning office. As soon as they told him that, he went and got an office director job and is now the DAA in the Middle East Bureau. But he said to them, "Look, I can't sit around and wait, I've gotten the job, I'm going." So he went after two years, which was a shame because he was really talented.

Anyways, I'm having lunch with Kevin Brownell and I tell him, "I don't know, this is making me crazy". I launched into this evaluation job with tremendous confidence and now I feel like I've lost it. Should I do this? Should I do that? I had come to learn that because I was over sixty, I could retire from USAID. He said, "we in E3 are going crazy because we were required by Congress to do this construction report and we hired a firm to do a construction report", which was really an audit of construction projects. He said, "would you come and talk to Charles North", who was the head of the E3 Bureau. Charles North had been my intern in the African bureau in '97. and his dad Haven North had been my boss five years before that, so Charles and I had stayed very cordial all those years. So I went to Charles and said, "you know what, I can rewrite your report for you", which they were very grateful for. The problem with the report was that it was given to an engineering firm. There's all this data and Charles got me a group of smart number crunchers. We refocused on the types of decisions USAID needed to make with the report. I mean, that's my whole career. What does the report need to convey to help them

do their work better? I did that for the last six months. I sat in a little cubicle in E3 and figured out how to retire.

Q: Were you still doing some of the PPL work? You just dropped that. They were doing all the whatever was left there since a woman didn't come on until October, they were dealing with this.

CLAPP-WINCEK: The practical team leaders and Elizabeth Rowan held it together for six months. Oh, and no, I take it back, it was also the political appointee, who was a good buddy of Raj, Negar Akhavi. She was lovely. She learned a lot about evaluation while she was there and she's the one who actually came to me and said, Would you come back? There is another whole thread to what I was unhappy about. And this is that Larry Garber had decided that I was racially discriminatory. This was when they told me that they'd posted my job. This problem had started six months before. So about a year and a half into my tenure, my staff is coming to me and saying, Larry is asking me if you are racially discriminatory. And when I say no, he keeps pushing.

Q: Really what pumped in all these?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I can think of several things, but I will never really know. Did I say things that I shouldn't have said? Sure. I do know that the most proximate cause was, in my first six months in that job, they detailed someone to our office. Part of the ___ function from the Management Bureau that Gerry Britann had worked on, was being transferred over to LER. And with it, they were transferring one staff person that they had hired (many months after Gerry had transferred). I had done consulting with that office in the Management Bureau for years. One of the people that I was good friends with from that office came to me and was apologetic. But they very smartly chose to transfer a person whose background was not in the kind of evaluation that we do, which is programmatic evaluation, but it was in personnel and admin evaluation, which is why she was appropriate for that office in the Management Bureau. She did not have a sense of her own strengths and weaknesses. And so by the time they decided to post my position on the foreign service bid list, she had sued me, Larry, who was the DAA, Susan Reichle, who was the AA, Raj, and I forgot who else. So we were all in a lawsuit. We were all being accused of discrimination, because I wouldn't give her the kind of work that she thought she should do. And she went in and talked to Larry Garber. That's when he started going back to my staff, I don't know why he could not see that this woman was emotionally troubled.

Q: Did she ever discuss this with you, personally?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Anyway, after several lawsuits against USAID, she was required to come back to PPL. She was supposed to report Larry Garber and instead she asked to report to me. And this trusted person who told me this said that the Agency believed that I was discriminatory and that I was the problem. But when she asked to report to me, they were all surprised.

Q: Did you actually retire from AID?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I did.

Q: You get a pension? Congratulations.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Thank you. But they only gave me credit for seventeen years. And so it's not a very big pension.

Q: But seventeen years, you get credit for the years you were direct hire or the years that you also were a consultant, or how does it work?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Consultant doesn't count. FSL counts. And part of the time I was in, I think the whole time I was in the African bureau, I was a thirty-two hour week appointee. And the reason I thought I should have asked for an audit is that I almost never worked thirty-two hours except for right after my kids were born. And so if they actually went back and looked up the hours instead of the years where I was listed as a thirty-two hour appointee, but it might or might not and what the hell do you know?

Q: And unfortunately, I don't know the basis on which the pensions are calculated now, whether they used today's salaries or the ones that you were involved in.

CLAPP-WINCEK: There's a current ratio. I left the defined benefit plan, and I went to the other one.

Independent Consultant, 2015 to present

Q: All right. And as you look back on that, and you haven't worked for AID in a direct hire position, or anything like that, since 2015. Is that right?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Oh, yeah, absolutely.

Q: Have you consulted for AID in that period?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Part of the reason I did the DoD work after I left USAID in 2015 is that due to me being a strong personality, I felt like my staff had to step up when I left. I felt kind of bad leaving them in the lurch. They were shocked when I told them that I was leaving in June instead of staying till October. And I am flattered to say many of them were very disappointed. But as I started to explain that they got it. I mean, there were things I hadn't been telling them about.

But they needed to do the best they could and I needed to get out of the way. There were people who would call me and we would have lunch if they wanted advice, or if they just wanted to check in. But I needed to get out of that system. That's why I went and did the DoD work.

Just a year ago, I got a phone call asking if I would do a USAID evaluation. That and it was the first real piece of consulting work for USAID I had done after I left in 2015. I completed it last August. They were rewriting the democratic decentralization handbook. And its sixth chapter was on monitoring and evaluation. It was printed in 2009. And they needed the book to be reedited. And would I edit the chapter on monitoring and evaluation. And so I took it for fifteen days. And what was hilarious is that it was fifteen very thoughtful pages on-I had fifteen days, I'm thinking, okay, fifteen days to edit fifteen pages, I'd be able to do that. Well, what happened? They had written fifteen pages on why you should only do impact evaluation. They have a very thoughtful discussion of how you could mitigate the downsides of impact evaluation and democratic decentralization. I mean, this is not like the perfect tool for this. And they had a little section called monitoring and evaluation that basically said, don't use the money for anything other than impact evaluation. So really, I had to write a monitoring and evaluation chapter out of whole cloth. And it turned out to be a much harder job than I thought. They wanted examples, I had to come up with all that as well. But anyway, it was way fun. That was the first thing that I did.

Q: Did they, in fact, adopt your version?

CLAPP-WINCEK: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. And it was fun. I worked with three very smart PhD political scientists and learned quite a bit democratic decentralization.

Q: I mean, that was now six, seven, almost eight years ago, in that period of time, you've been doing your DOD. And how did that compare with working for USAID?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I have this cottage industry. While I was at USAID, and shortly after I left, people would hire me, people. I reviewed the MCC evaluation policy twice. They didn't listen to me as much as they should have. I reviewed the State Department evaluation policy twice. At USAID I was there to implement their evaluation policy. And of course, one of the good things about being head of evaluation at USAID is you are a USAID representative to the DAC Eval Net. Twice a year, the Eval-Net meets in Paris. And I got to go represent USAID. Those studies I had commissioned to show the quality of the reports, I would go and I would present those in Paris. One of the other country's representatives said to me, "do you know hire, you're the only person who represents anything other than plans?" These are all professional evaluators. Why aren't they tracking their own progress?

I got asked to review the security cooperation evaluation policy. Security Cooperation is part of the Department of Defense. I was good buddies with the State Department person, Eileen Cronin, who was responsible for drafting the security cooperation evaluation policy. I had reviewed State Department's evaluation policy as well, as she and I dealt together on a regular basis. She took a six months detail to DOD to work on the security cooperation policy. So she asked me to review that evaluation policy that they were writing over there.

When Eileen finished the six months detail, she asked if I would do some consulting for that office so that they had somebody they could ask questions. They don't have anybody who knows this stuff. And I'm thinking, sure I'm trying to stay out of USAID. I knew the people at RAND, because I had done some work with them before I went back into USAID. I knew that would be the easiest way for the DOD office to pay me. I went to Charlie Ries and asked if they would pick me up for these purposes. So they made me an adjunct faculty person. It ramped up into three million dollars worth of monitoring and evaluation work for RAND.

Q: You're talking about DoD or Rand.

CLAPP-WINCEK: DOD. DOD was the pass through, do you know what I mean?

Q: Yeah, I understand.

CLAPP-WINCEK: It could have been any consulting firm except for DOD, the FFRDC model, the federally funded research and the FFRDC is a parastatal. And DOD can treat Rand staff as if they're direct hire, and it is more convenient than contractors. Then they got a new head of their evaluation function, David Cate. In that year 2018, I worked so much that I outgrew adjunct status. I worked 60 percent of my time that year for that office. And then, I shifted to supporting them through a consulting firm. By the summer of 2019, the staff shifted. The amount of work I did in 2020, 2021, and 2022 depended on who was in that office. From the summer of 2019, to the summer of 2020, I did no work for those guys.

Q: It's interesting how much this consulting business depends on people who you know.

CLAPP-WINCEK: And who trusts you. It's a very fast paced business.

Q: Yeah. Are you going to continue to do this kind of business? I mean, do you ever get tired of working? Is this a part of your psyche that you just want to keep doing this? You are still very young. I know.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Seventy. I'm a very young seventy in December. I decided I did two task orders for DOD people, between about May and November. And I really have to stop working with the DOD. Every time I do it, good people, well intentioned people. DOD was starting from scratch in 2016. They were spending billions of dollars on foreign assistance with really no monitoring evaluation system. The DoD can't even tell you where all their money got spent on anything. They certainly don't know what got spent on security cooperation. If they don't even know where the money is spent, they can't figure out what effect they got beyond what makes the headlines, which is part of the reason the whole Afghanistan thing was such a mess. It was ramping it up from nil.

I kept trying to convince the evaluation office for security cooperation that they needed to hire people to do a study of the work they did and create an evaluation system for them. I could make suggestions, but DoD is a very complex system. They needed somebody

with understanding of more systems than I mean, I know the little USAID system, which is tiny. I mean, they're just different scales

Q: Are these career military people you're talking about?

CLAPP-WINCEK:. They don't put their best staff on security cooperation; the business of the Department of Defense is warfighting. Since last April, security cooperation is getting more attention because all that money we give to Ukraine is security cooperation. We better take this seriously. This stuff matters.
I'm trying to work less than half of my time doing other interesting evaluations stuff. I don't know, maybe for a couple more years.

Q: But because I'm sure that there are many other things in life that you could do if you wanted to.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Oh, well, then there is a personal wrinkle here. Which is why I took too much work last June, which is why I was doing three projects at the same time. My family issues got complicated.

Q: How old is she?

CLAPP-WINCEK: That's a key factor. I might have backed off by now. But it's like if I can at least keep covering what I'm sending to them. Then my retirement plan looks okay. But I will meet with my financial advisors in another week. That is a factor. I got thrown a couple curveballs. As you can tell, I still enjoy the hell out of this.

Q: Well, you certainly do and you have not lost your enthusiasm for AID. I'm really sorry about that. It's too bad for AID because there's nobody who knows the system better than you and that you are not really interested in working for AID any longer for totally understandable reasons.

Concluding Thoughts

CLAPP-WINCEK: The consulting I'm currently doing is just doing an evaluation for USAID. I've been gone long enough that I'm not going to get in anybody's way. But there are two things that I would like on the record about USA ID. And one of them is they really need to recognize that evaluation is an expertise. And either the director or the deputy of an evaluation office needs to have that expertise. And it can't any longer be on the job learning on monitoring and evaluation. I mean, I got away with it, because I invested in on the job learning for thirty years.

Q: It was no longer on the job learning by the time you were done it five years or so or whatever. I mean, that's not on the job learning at thirty years.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Well, I had systematically read those journals from the American Evaluation Association, I systematically attended the American Evaluation Association, I read the books all the time that the World Bank put out on their evaluations.

Q: Absolutely.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I invested in a broad understanding, just being a USAID evaluation contractor, I don't think really necessarily qualifies you.

Q: But when you say that the director or the Deputy Director, you don't think that both should be people with background in evaluation?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I don't think it's necessary. Do I think it would be better? Absolutely, I think it would be better. But somebody has to mind the store. So knowing how to manage your bureaucracy is a very different skill from evaluating skills. And an office director needs them both.

Q: That's a changing skill too.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I want to say one other thing that I record that I will not edit out, and is that USAID, systematically, preferences Foreign Service officers. Systematically, that Foreign Service limited thing is because Foreign Service officers need office director posts to come back to in the United States. I'm sorry, that is not the right way to run the agency. There are Washington skills. That's why they have a civil service? And they systematically discriminate against civil service careers. It is why I saw the handwriting on the wall in 1991. It's part of the reason I left. It's like I can see how this works. And I'm not going to do well. And so that's part of the reason I left. And they need to stop doing that. And I will say our USAID Alumni Association, which I may edit out, is very heavily Foreign Service officers.

Q: Oh, no, I think that the USAID Alumni Association leadership recognizes this as a problem. And is trying to do something about it. It's very hard in a variety of ways. I mean, to even find the names of retirees, because USAID does not for privacy reasons, it won't give you those names or addresses. And it's very complicated. But nevertheless, you're absolutely right. And the Alumni Association knows that. But it's known it for a number of years and not been very successful in dealing with it. Because they have a privileged class that continues in power, and they will only lose privilege by operating in a different way.

CLAPP-WINCEK: I agree. But what I want is people reflect back and they go, boy, this is off, but nobody did it while they were in.

Q: Yeah, no, I think that's an issue. And I don't know how, if at all, they are dealing with it now. We're coming to the end here. And is there anything you would like to add before we bring this to a close in terms of you made a couple of critical points there just now, but is there anything else that you don't think you've had a chance to say that you would like to

say, of course, you have the opportunity when you go through the transcript to add in and subtract but I certainly don't urge you to subtract it. very much. I mean, I think this has all been fascinating for me because I'm still, I have a lot to learn by myself. And this is a whole area where I may have been responsible for an evaluation office, but I cannot tell you that I spent a long time studying this. And I remember an event you and Richard held for the USAID Alumni Association event, and I think you remember that, and I thought, Oh, my God! There's so much I don't know. Anyway, is there anything in the way of final words you would like to add at this point?

CLAPP-WINCEK: I think USAID gets credit for early on. And I mean, like the 1970s, investing in monitoring and evaluation. And they get credit way before any other foreign assistance agency in the world. And they get credit for that. It goes up, it goes down, but it always comes back. And I think USAID should get a ton of credit for a long-term commitment to monitoring and evaluation. And I think they're better for it. I can be highly critical of USAID and was in the two studies I did with Richard Blue. But I think overall-is the glass half empty? Or Is the glass half full? And I really think that USAID gets credit for keeping that glass half full. I think that's the thing.

And I guess, the other thing I would say is, my career has been chaotic to communicate. I'll be also because I am not the most linear person you have ever met. I do think that USAID should think about flexibility for people coming and going. I watched many friends burnout, and just hung on until thirty years, do you know what I mean? And way less creative, really good people, but thirty years in the same place is an awfully long time. All the stuff I learned by my moving around and the perspective I was able to gain. So I do think that they should also be supportive of more coming and going and make that an easier thing.

Q: Well, I mean, your personality and your tenacity. And whatever else it was that made it possible for you to move into this consultant role. I just don't think there are many people who are prepared to put themselves into that kind of risky position.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Although they could go to other jobs.

Q: I understand. And some people do. But some people are not created for that. But I think the point is, we should make it easier. The government should make it easier for that to happen, flow in and out. And in a sense, political appointees have that opportunity.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Yes, they did.

Q: But you really want this for people whose careers are not going to be influenced by whether they are with one party or another party.

CLAPP-WINCEK: You remember back to the old schedule C's, they were administratively determined appointments, but not political?

Q: Well, you're talking to one. During my entire career at AID, or my entire career in government, I never had a secure position. I spent five years working for the Peace Corps. And that was not a civil service position. And then I spent fourteen years at AID. And I came in during a freeze as an AD. And when the time came to apply for a civil service position, there were not enough people of the not enough Republicans interested in having that position. And I was a career person. And when I became an assistant administrator, I had a political position, but I was not. I didn't ever feel that I was political, but at the time I had to resign on January 20, 1981. Not a single day during those nineteen years that I have a secure position. I know what you're talking about.

CLAPP-WINCEK: And some of that is OPM. Some of that is way bigger than USAID. But my understanding is that that policy issue of shifting the ADs to be I mean, sorry, shifting those schedules to be an all those AD, it became all political, they made them all political. And the percentage of political appointees at USAID, I understand, is much higher than anyplace else. And I'll bet you that's a decision made within USAID. I'll bet it is.

Q: I think part of it is the problem of not getting enough civil service or foreign service positions approved by Congress and having to get stuff done. Anyway, this is probably not necessarily part of your oral history.

CLAPP-WINCEK: And by saying how grateful I was that I got to be the Director of Evaluation for those three years. I mean, I am grateful for that. And I do look back at it with pride. I should say that too.

Q: That's, I think, a very nice way to finish this off. And I want to say, Cindy, that it was just a great pleasure for me to really get to know you, since I hadn't really known you that well before. And I'm very grateful. And we are very grateful that you were willing to sit for essentially six continuous hours talking about your career, and it will be a very important part of the oral history collection at ADST and at the Library of Congress. And the only question really now is, after we go through this whole period in which it gets transcribed, then you're going to go through this again and see if there are any things you want to add. And hopefully, not much you want to delete.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Like a final evaluation report? A little bit, but I will be careful.

Q: You have nine days of your contract to finish this one off. And anyway, I'm going to stop the recording now.

CLAPP-WINCEK: Thank you. It has been a pleasure.

Q: Thank you very, very much. It's been great. I appreciate it.

End of interview