This interview transcript has been edited by BW (with the approval of LA) for clarity and concision.

Bernard Wood (BW) and Leslie Aiello (LA)

BW: Please, for the record, could let us know your full name, and tell me where the Crum comes from?

LA: My full name is Leslie Crum Aiello. Crum is my maiden name, and Aiello is the name of my first husband. I always took a lot of stick for Crum when I was a kid, so I wasn't too eager to maintain my maiden name. But this upset my parents, and so I've always used it as my middle name.

BW: Remind us where you worked until you retired, and when you retired?

LA: I've retired twice. I first retired in 2005 from University College London, where I was Professor of Biological Anthropology, Head of Department and then Head of the Graduate School. Then, after I left UCL, I came to New York to be President of the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, and I retired from there in 2016.

BW: Could you tell us a little about your family?

LA: It was a very normal American family. I was born in Pasadena, California. My father had been in the Pacific Theater during WW2 and he fell in love with California. So.
after WW2 he and my mother went to Caltech to study mechanical or aeronautical engineering, and I was born while he was a student there. And then we just stayed on in Southern California, in Los Angeles, where I grew up. I went to university at UCLA (University of California, Los Angeles).

BW: Tell us about your mother.

LA: My mother was a dedicated homemaker. She had a good eye and was very interested in antiques, so I asked why doesn't she get a job in an antique store. And she turned to me without missing a step, and said, "What would the neighbors think?" She was very much of a woman of her time, who felt that volunteer work was wonderful, but paid work would indicate a deficiency in my father to support the family.

BW: Did you have brothers and sisters?

LA: I had one younger brother. I was a little bit of a problem for him because he wasn't academically inclined, and my parents were quite hard on him. But he lived a very happy life. He repaired fruit-sorting machines for packing houses, and ended up having a small farm in the Central Valley. We were five years apart, so we were not that close as children, but we became closer in our adult years.

BW: Did you ever think about going to another university in the California system, or
outside of California?

LA: I always wanted to go to Stanford. Growing up the public school system in California was having a hard time coping with us original baby boomers. So, rather than going to school starting in the fall and then finishing your year in May or June, or whenever it might be, my cohort started in January, so I went through my grammar school and all the way through high school on a January to January schedule. So, when I was ready to go to university my parents said, "Well, why don't you just go to UCLA for a term, and then if you want to transfer, you can transfer." And I think they breathed a huge sigh of relief when I didn't transfer, because even at that time Stanford was considerably more expensive than the state colleges. My tuition at UCLA in 1963, when I started, was $75 a term, or $150/year. This was the heyday of California education, where they had a very good system of junior colleges, state colleges and universities.

BW: Did you know what your major was going to be when you went to university, or did that emerge once you were there?

LA: I absolutely didn't know. I was always interested in biology, and I started out that January as a double major in geology and biology, then I had an opportunity to go do an archeological field school in Cedar City, Utah, that first summer and it was fantastic. It was a Basketmaker site, and I had never had an experience like that. The process of discovery was exciting. After
I came back, I remember sitting in an introductory to anthropology course thinking, "Well, I'm never going to have to support myself. I'm going to have a husband who can do that. Why don't I just indulge myself, and change my major to anthropology?" And that's what I did!

BW: Why biological anthropology? Who were your teachers? Is there anybody we would recognize?

LA: Oh, yes. It was an exciting time at UCLA. My mentor in biological anthropology as an undergraduate was Joe Birdsell. He was well-known for his field work in Australia, but he was also an extremely talented communicator and teacher. He would come into his big (*c*.500 student) introductory lectures with his tie tucked into his shirt, ask someone in the front row where he left off, then the words would flow. No visual aids or anything like that.
I was his teaching assistant when I was a graduate student, so even though I must have sat through his courses four or five times, he never gave the same lecture twice. He would always tie it into what was published in *American Scientist* or any of the more popular journals, and this made it fascinating for the students.

BW: That's a tough act to follow!

LA: I once asked him how he did it. "My dear," he said, "if you've done it for 50 years, you could do it too." Birdsell was the major influence up through my master's degree. This was the time of the "new" archaeology, and Sally and Lewis Binford were both at UCLA. I worked with Jim Sackett, a Hallam Movius student who was interested in the Upper Paleolithic in France. I went into the field with him in 1968, and then again in 1972 or 1973. Although these excavations were a great experience, it turned me off to archaeology in large part because of Francois Bordes' wife! De Sonneville-Bordes once came through the site and said, "Oh, you have Magdalenian Zero here. This is wonderful", but no one had a clue what Magdalenian Zero was! And at that point, I decided that rather than being interested in tool typology, which was one of the main things that was going on in French Paleolithic Archaeology at the time, I was much more interested in the people who actually made the tools.

BW: This makes it all the more remarkable that you ended up doing your PhD in a medical school in England with Michael Day! He was not an archeologist, and wasn't really a biological anthropologist. How did you get from UCLA to London?

LA: I'll give you the true story! After I'd finished my master's degree I took a few years off doing adjunct teaching and part-time teaching in some of the California junior and state colleges. I would have been happy with a career in the California college system, but my first husband, whom I had married in graduate school, let me know in no uncertain terms that I was redundant: I was 'surplus to his

requirements'! This was the impetus to go back to graduate school to do a Ph.D. at UCLA. But after the first semester, my advisor, Bernard Campbell, returned to the UK, and I was left recovering from my divorce and without a supervisor. I was still teaching at Cal State, Northridge, where Gail Kennedy_who had done her PhD with Michael Day_was teaching. One day she looked at me and said, "Leslie, you're in about the same shape I was in after my husband died", which was why she went to the UK. So, she said, "Why don't *you* go to the UK and finish your PhD?" So, this is why Michael Day became my advisor, and why my interest settled on comparative anatomy and human evolution.

BW: What were you planning to work on with Bernard Campbell?

LA: Although I was TA'ing for Bernard, I had not developed a project with him, so with Gail Kennedy's help I arranged to switch to work with Michael Day in London.

BW: Give us a two-minute version of Bernard Campbell.

LA: Bernard was very taken up by the counterculture of California, so much so that for a while he lived on the beach at Malibu with Sally Binford! I had little sense of him as a scientist or a paleoanthropologist, other than him telling me that his first thesis was declined at Cambridge, so he had to do a second one!

BW: Those were different times!

LA: Yeah, but his textbooks were extremely successful.

BW: So, you arrive in London in January 1975. Had you met Michael Day before?

LA: No. I'd corresponded with him, and I think he was short of PhD students! You were finishing up, or maybe you were in the middle of your thesis?

BW: I finished my PhD in 1975. We should explain, as you have already hinted at, that in the UK at that time there was no coursework. You had an advisor, normally the advisor would get a grant for a PhD student, and they would advertise for a student in the topic they had support for, and you just got on and did your thesis. Let's jump to your experience as a graduate student with Michael. Can you explain for us what it was like for you to be Michael's PhD student?

LA: Well, the first year was the most miserable year of my life! I was trying to 'find' myself and establish what I really wanted to do in life, and rebuild after five years of marriage. I was really trying to decide who I was, and where I wanted to go. I was terribly lonely, because there was no cohort of graduate students that I had experienced in California, plus I was a more mature student. I was older than the medical students, and there were only a handful of other research students who were in various departments at St. Thomas' Hospital Medical School where Michael had moved to, or in other areas of the anatomy department. What really saved me was that both Peter Andrews and Chris Stringer had just arrived as young professionals at the Natural History Museum. The two of them encouraged me, and kept telling me I had interesting ideas and to keep going. Then, after a year_this would be September 1976_I got a temporary job teaching at University College London (aka UCL). Even though I was still doing my research, I had landed back into a situation that I felt totally at home in because I already had five years, or so, of teaching under my belt. I felt very comfortable with teaching undergraduate students. There was also much more of a university atmosphere at UCL than there was at the medical school.

BW: Who was at UCL, and how did you get the job?

LA: I got the job because they were desperate! At that time UCL was the only American-style (i.e., social and biological anthropology) Anthropology Department. Nigel Barnicot, who had been Professor of Biological Anthropology, had unexpectedly passed away. As the story goes, he couldn't stand the professor of social anthropology, so much so that they used to take their disputes directly to the Provost (aka the President) of UCL. Everyone suspected that the Provost took Barnicot's death as a sign from God that he could get rid of biological anthropology! The three other biological anthropologists in the department didn't have PhDs, and only one of them had a permanent job. I was brought in to help cover the teaching until they decided what they were going to do with biological anthropology. As I remember, four people applied for the temporary position, but I was the only one with any teaching experience that was halfway relevant to the curriculum they were

looking to cover. That's why I got hired, but I had to interview for that job every year for the next four or five years! Although the job was
temporary, it provided an environment I was much more comfortable with, and I had the type of colleagues that I'd had in the US.

BW: How did you come up with the topic of your thesis? And had you made any decision about what your research interest was likely to be?

LA: Michael Day_as you know very well_was interested in post-cranial evolution (i.e., from the neck down) with a special interest in the evolution of bipedal walking, but what was disturbing to me_you may have had a different experience_was I don't think I ever had an intellectual conversation with Michael! At one point I went in to talk with him about what I thought was an academic problem. He looked at me, and he said, "Leslie, are you a depressive?", so I was pretty much on my own in terms of designing the project. Also, in that first year I was a bit disappointed because one of the reasons I had come to the UK was I was interested in fieldwork. I enjoyed the discovery part, and I thought that I would be able to go out to Kenya, as you were able to do. But, by the time I arrived Michael had stopped going to Kenya. That aspect, where I thought that I was going to be working with original fossils, didn't really materialize.

BW: Well, although Michael went to Kenya, he never went into the field. He had a Land Rover with the St. Thomas' crest on the side, but Richard Leakey used to make comments about how clean the Land Rover was!

LA: In any case, I'd had expectations that didn't pan out. But with that said, he never stood in my way.

BW: Looking at it another way, being with Michael gave you the opportunity to be in London, and you took the very best advantage of that opportunity. I know you eventually went to the field in Turkey at Pasalar. Is that correct?

LA: Yes, that's right. I became interested in bone strength from the point of biomechanics, and I started working at Imperial College on bone bending and strength. But, I realized that was very much out of my element. At that point, I decided that if I'm going to get my PhD, I need to do something I can do myself. Allometry was a big thing at the time, and I have always liked mathematics, so I thought “Why don't I do that?" My PhD was on was the allometry of the post-cranial

skeleton. I focused on the scaling relationships between the lengths of the fore- and hindlimbs?

BW: Was that using allometry in the Gouldian sense, as a ‘criterion of subtraction’? In other words, what would have been the consequences for relative limb lengths if nothing happened other than a change in size?

LA: Exactly. Do modern humans have relatively long legs just because they are large? Of course, this was shortly after Lucy had been found, so everybody was interested in what Lucy's limb proportions actually meant, and Lucy figured prominently in my thesis.

BW: I had forgotten_until I looked at your CV_that you worked on allometry. I worked on allometry too, but I'm completely convinced that Michael went to his grave not understanding allometry!

LA: Nor did he understand multivariate statistics! But he was a fine anatomist.

BW: My impression is that you have always been a quantitative person. Were you good at math at school?

LA: Math was my fallback, If I didn't make it in anthropology, I was going to become a CPA (certified public accountant) or a statistician. I was one of the women in the very late 1950s or early 1960s who excelled in math at school, but I was given no encouragement whatsoever. I remember there was me and another woman in a calculus class; the rest were men. The teacher just ignored both of us. She ended up getting her PhD in statistics. I went into anthropology.

BW: Let's go back to 1981 when you were awarded your thesis. Who was the examiner?

LA: Eric Ashton (N.B., who was in Solly Zuckerman's department in Birmingham).

BW: Eric was my examiner, too!

LA: My PhD exam was totally underwhelming, and it was one of the experiences that influenced my philosophy for how I worked with my own graduate students. I don't think Michael ever read my thesis, and just before the viva he asked me whether I said anything in my thesis that I hadn't already published, or given in a paper somewhere. I think Eric Ashton read it on the train from Birmingham to London!

BW: We should say that Birmingham is probably_in those days_less than a two-hour rail journey from London. That doesn't allow a lot of time to read a thesis!

LA: The actual viva only lasted about 20 minutes. It didn't get past, "How was your vacation in Kenya?" After I had finished my thesis, I decided that since I didn't make it to Kenya for any type of fieldwork, I would spend six weeks there, meet people and see what it was like. The viva never got past that, and when you've worked on something for as long as it takes to do a PhD, you would actually like to talk with people who should be interested in what you wrote!
I remember that after 30 minutes at most, they both got up and said, "Well, fine, thank you very much," and walked out of the room. I had no idea what was happening. I told one of the technicians in the anatomy department that I thought it was over and that I was leaving. That was it. The only thing I remember from that day was that when I got back to UCL, one of my colleagues had put a new sign on my door that said, 'Dr. Aiello'. That actually made me cry! But there was no feeling that either Michael or Eric were going to consider me a colleague, or were halfway interested in the work that I'd done. But the story has a reasonably happy ending, because when I saw Michael a few years before he died_he came to Washington DC

for a meeting you and Brian Richmond organized that focused on the foot_and he said, "Well, Leslie, I don't think I treated you very well as a PhD student, but I've been very proud of you." I thought that was extremely nice.

BW: Where was your first permanent job?

LA: It was at UCL. They had decided to retain biological anthropology, and Bob Martin had come as Reader in Biological Anthropology. Bob was keen on another candidate for the permanent job, but I interviewed again for the permanent version of the position I had been occupying on a temporary basis. Bob was pushing for 'his' candidate, but the department came down on my side. The other candidate was a fantastic guy, but he was interested in non-human primates and the Anthropology Department wanted to keep the focus on human rather than on non-human primate evolution. All of my 29 or 30-year career in the UK was spent at UCL.

BW: How did UCL change on that time?

LA: When I started there, there were 6,000 students. Now, it's this behemoth that has taken over a lot of the small colleges in the London area. It's just unrecognizable.

BW: Well, it took over The Middlesex Hospital Medical School, which is where I was until 1985! If I had to choose one word that would describe your research interest, it would be the word 'energy'. How did that come about?

LA: Energy from the point of view of energetics?

BW: Yes.

LA: That was entirely accidental, but it was related to my mathematical background and interest in allometry. Bob Martin and David Pilbeam were organizing the Cambridge Encyclopedia of Human Evolution, and were short of somebody to write the section on primate energetics. Bob turned to me, and said, "Leslie, why don't you do it?" It wasn't so off the mark because most of the energetics studies at that time were on locomotor energetics. But while I was doing that short encyclopedia entry, I realized there was this major question of where the energy came from to fuel the large modern human brain. It was a question no one had been able to answer.

I was quite naive about energetics, so I asked myself what organs in your body used more, or less, energy. Why don't I look into the allometry of all this? If we blew up a monkey to modern human body size, what would the size of its organs be, and what would their energetic cost be? It came out almost too good to be true! Of course, the brain in modern humans was bigger than expected, but the guts were smaller than expected. That was where “brains and guts” in human evolution, and where the “Expensive Tissue Hypothesis” came from.

BW: How did your fruitful collaboration with Peter Wheeler begin?

LA: In a panic, basically, because I realized that while this relationship was there, and I could see it by manipulating the statistics, I didn't have the energetic expertise to explain it. At that time Peter was involved with heat budgets, and that work attracted press interest. I forget how I contacted him, whether I just cold-called him or whether there was an intermediary. But he got interested in the brain/gut trade-off hypothesis. That's how the collaboration started, but the details of the history of how our collaboration began has faded! But we had a good time putting together the paper that was ultimately published in *Current Anthropology*. When somebody comes to you with an idea, and you have some relevant expertise, it is easy to collaborate. We just worked together very well, and I really appreciated Peter’s creative mind.

BW: He was an interesting and creative guy. He was ambitious to get the research story right, but he wasn't academically ambitious.

LA: Did you know he was a ‘twitcher’? He told me his goal in life was to see every bird species. He just had different expectations for himself and what would make him happy.

BW: When I last saw him, he told me he was determined to see every living primate in the wild, and I think he came pretty close to doing that. So, your research was going well at UCL. Why did you decide to get involved in running the graduate school at UCL? What made you move into administration?

LA: We need to backtrack a bit, because we have skipped over the anatomy book.

BW: I was going to come to the anatomy book, but let's deal with it now. We need to explain that the anatomy book was a joint effort between you and Christopher Dean.

LA: Well, it actually started with me, and it started with Lucy. The anatomy book predates the Expensive Tissue Hypothesis, and again it grew out of my interest in teaching and in communicating science. When the technical descriptions of Lucy came out in a series of papers in the *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, although I had a PhD in anatomy, I didn't really know what they were talking about! I just didn't understand the anatomical jargon. And I thought, "Well, if I don't understand this, there are a lot of anthropologists out there that are going to be struggling the same way that I did." So, one weekend I sat down and wrote a proposal for the book that eventually became *An Introduction to Human Evolutionary Anatomy*. I remember putting it in the post box on Sunday afternoon, and early in the week I got a call from Academic Press. My first response was, "Gee, I'm impressed with the postal service"! They were interested in it because, unbeknownst to me, they were developing a series of handbooks; the initial working title was *The Handbook of Human Evolutionary Anatomy*. After talking with Andrew Richford, who was the editor at that point, I began to panic about what I'd gotten myself into, but when I talked with Christopher Dean_who was one of my colleagues at UCL, but he was in the Medical School_he expressed interest in the project. He did everything from the neck up, and I did everything from the neck down. There's a lot about on the neck in the book, because we tackled it from both directions!

BW: We need to explain that there is the anatomy of modern humans, and then there is anatomy that is peculiar to early hominins, so the terminology we use in paleoanthropology would not be used or understood by a human anatomist. For example, the cranium of *Paranthropus boisei* looks as if it's come from Mars, and many of the terms used to describe a modern human skull or cranium just wouldn't work to describe it. The textbook was an absolutely brilliant idea. What stage in your career were you when you did this?

LA: Many people thought I was much too young., and I still have a letter sent to the Publishers (which I am pretty sure came from Michael) suggesting I wasn't capable of doing it! But I had a very strong feeling that there was a need for it in the field.

BW: It is much more than a textbook. It is quite often cited in research papers because there is research-level information in the book.

LA: Well, Chris and I tried. And before we go any further, we should probably let everybody know that you were a huge help because you proof-read the whole thing for us!

BW: Thank you! I remember seeing the book and thinking "Why the hell didn't I think of that myself?"! Most books about human evolution focus on systematics. Yours didn't.

LA: One of the models for the book was the Napier & Napier *Handbook of Living Primates*. We went to Academic Press because they had kept it in print for over 20 years at that time. They were someone I wanted to work with.

BW: You avoided contentious issues like systematics.

LA: The staying power of the *Handbook of Living Primates* was that it was descriptive; it avoided interpretation, so Chris and I decided at the outset that we didn't want to age the book by taking any type of theoretical stance in it. We used to meet for breakfast every morning in the nurse's dining room at University College Hospital; sometimes we talked about the book, sometimes we didn't. Both of us look back at it now and wonder how we ever wrote the thing!

BW: The really important decision you made was just to have you and Chris. You only had to please each other!

LA: It was a happy working relationship; we never argued. The book took four years, with the fourth year devoted to the illustrations because the publisher didn't want to put money into the illustrations until they were sure we were going to produce the text! But neither of us wanted to do a revision. We kept saying that if we did do a revision, it was going to be in the South of France, but Academic Press wasn't willing to put up that sort of money!

BW: Remind me when it was published?

LA: In 1990.

BW: You stayed at UCL until 2005. When did you make the decision to move into administration?

LA: There were several interacting factors. The UCL Anthropology Department was in dire straits. The accommodation was terrible, plus the powers that be decided that the Headship of the Department should be on a three-year rota, which was a total disaster. When I took over as the Head of Department in the mid-1990s (the Headship was supposed to go to Robin Dunbar, one of my biological anthropology colleagues, but he left UCL to take a job in Liverpoool) Anthropology was the worst-housed department in the entire university! No matter what metric you used (e.g., students or external research support per square meter, etc.) we were always at the bottom. The departing Provost said to me "Leslie, take the new guy on your deluxe tour of the department and see what you can do." Well, the long and the short of it was that I was able to get a new building for Anthropology. During the whole time I'd been at UCL from 1975 all the way up to 2005, I never had a lab. I felt if I was going to have to be Head of the Department, I wanted to do something significant for the department. Although it took a lot of work, I actually enjoyed learning how the UCL 'system' worked. Instead of the usual three-year stint, I was Head for five years, maybe sliding into six. And that gave me the time to put the new building in process.

BW: You became Head of the Graduate School?

LA: Yes, and because I went on a part-time contract in Anthropology, that opened up another job line for a junior colleague!

BW: My guess is that if you managed to wrangle a new building out of the administration, they must have developed some respect for your administrative ability?

LA: I think it was a love-hate relationship. I think that they were, in a way, a bit worried about me.

BW: Better having you inside the tent than outside!.

LA: Yes, and at that point nobody was taking the graduate school seriously.

BW: At that time how many women were in senior academic/administrative roles at UCL?

LA: Very few, but one was in charge of finance, and when I took over as Head of Department she said, "Leslie, my one piece of advice to you is to understand the

budget", and because I did, I was able to get some gains for the department. At that time Anthropology was unusual because roughly half of the academics were female. There weren't many other females who were either heads of department or deans, or whatever.

BW: Is there anything about your time at UCL we haven't covered?

LA: Just that it was an extremely positive experience for me. A lot of my female colleagues in the US ask me, "Well, what about harassment and all of that?" But I don't think that really was a factor, maybe because we were all young at the same time. We realized we all had our strong points and weak points, and we accepted them. We worked together and we weren't in direct competition.

BW: My sense is that there was a realization that there was enough for everybody. It
wasn't a zero-sum game that, "In order for me to succeed, she or he mustn't."

LA: And we were all spread out interest-wise. Chris Stringer with Neanderthals, Christopher Dean with his teeth, and Fred Spoor was working on the inner ear, and that does not include all the people at the Institute of Archaeology, such as Simon Hillson and Andy Garrard.

BW: Let’s shift to New York. Was the offer to become the President of the Wenner-Gren Foundation (W-GF) the reason you left UCL?

LA: The offer was the reason I left, but at that time I felt I'd probably gone as far as I could at UCL. I'd been a head of department and head of the graduate school. Remember, this was before ERC research grants, and because The Leverhulme Foundation was funding the Leverhulme Center in Cambridge, a major source of funding was disappearing for most of us, plus the Wellcome Trust, which had been funding human evolution for 10 years, was stopping that program. I had a number of PhD students funded through them, and when that source dried up, I realized that if I had stayed in the UK I was going to have a horrible time funding my research. If I hadn't moved to the US, my plan was get a joint appointment with the Institute of Archaeology, because at that point, the Arts and Humanities Research Council would fund the type of research we do in human evolution, but only as long as it wasn't done in an anthropology department! My last few students were all registered in the Institute of Archaeology so they could get funding. So. when an email came around about search for a new President at the

W-GF, I looked it up and figured I checked most of what they were looking for. And my husband, Richard Bruce and I both decided we had a new adventure left in this. I wasn't headhunted for the job. I actually applied for it.

BW: All I knew about the W-GF from the UK side of the Atlantic was that they convened conferences at the castle they owned in Austria called Burg Wartenstein, and the conferences resulted in very influential edited volumes. What did you know about the Foundation?

LA: My introduction to the W-GF was way back when I was a student at UCLA, when they began their casting program. They made the first high quality casts of hominin fossils. I knew about the conferences through the Binfords, and it was then that I realized you were nobody if your advisor(s) hadn't been invited to Burg Wartenstein! It was quite the thing for anthropology in general because the foundation funds across the broad spectrum of anthropology. In the early days the W-GF was best known for high-profile meetings and edited volumes that came out through the late 1950s, 1960s and into the early 1970s. Nowadays, I think it is best known because it is a serious funder for anthropology. It provides c.$6M annually, most of which goes to students, as ~$25K grants to support doctoral research. I am always surprised how many people will come up to me and say, "a W-GF grant started my career", or “the first grant I was given came from the W-GF”. Clark Howell received the first ever student grant while he was a student at the University of Chicago.

BW: That would explain his closeness with Lita Osmundsen.

LA: We should mention that Lita Osmundsen had been the wife of the person who initially ran the W-GF, Paul Fejos. After he died in the early 1960s, she took over the W-GF and ran it for over 20 years. She was very powerful influence in anthropology.

BW: I never went to the castle_so I'm very much in the second tier_but I do remember going to meetings at the W-GF headquarters on 71st Street, right by Central Park. Lita Osmundsen
made diagrams that recorded who was talking to whom. She had some very well-developed ideas about which were the important parts of the table to be at, and she would move people around if she didn't like the dynamics that were going on!

BW: Let's get back to your career, and ask you that if there was a fire and you could only rescue one publication, which would it be?

LA: Well, I have two hands, so I would have the anatomy book in one hand, and in the other I would have the paper proposing the “Expensive Tissue Hypothesis”.

BW: Is there a paper someone else wrote that you wished you had written?

LA: Not so much a single paper, but I've been very impressed with where others have taken the expensive tissue hypothesis, people like Herman Pontzer and Karen Isler. I wish I had the opportunity and expertise at the time to carry it much further than I did. And I'm so pleased to see the exciting research that's coming out now, looking at the importance of energy in human evolution. It's moving beyond the bones and stones, with research from other disciplines helping us understand what influences the course of human evolution. Fossil discoveries are tremendously important, but it's the new research lines (e.g., genetics, DNA, *Zooms*, and the isotopic work) that are adding value to the fossil evidence.

BW: I think you've already answered the question that if you hadn't gone into biological anthropology, what would you have done? Although I'm not sure I can see you as a CPA, I'm sure you would've been a very successful accountant!

LA: Well, what I'm doing now is botanic art; soon I will become a certified botanic artist.
I always enjoyed it when I was much younger, and I did a lot of the diagrams for publications I've done over the years. Botanic art is basically a form of scientific illustration; you need to really focus on the details. And it is almost a form of meditation, and it's a cliche, but it does make you see things differently.

BW: Did you do any of the illustrations in the *Introduction to Human Evolutionary Anatomy*?

LA: I think the only thing that I did was the timeline in the first chapter. All of the artwork was done by Joanna Cameron, who was employed by Academic Press. Chris and I would do a mock-up, she'd do a drawing and then we'd go back and forth over it. There are 600 drawings in the anatomy book!

BW: And the fairy godfather or godmother question. If there was one question in human evolution that you could ask and it would be answered, what would that be?

LA: That's a real hard one. *Nature* actually asked me that in 2010 when they were doing a perspectives thing on what the next decade going to hold. I didn't say anything about genetics or anything like that, but suggested "I want to know what's happening in East Asia." There's very exciting work coming out of China and Southeast Asia that is filling this big hole in our knowledge of human dispersals. The other 'hole' is India because the hominins would've had to have gone back and forth across India. I went to a workshop last year on the Mid-Pleistocene, and it became very apparent to me that we don't know what's going on in Africa, and where anatomically modern humans came from? Did they come from fossils like Kabwe, with a big face, or are there other things going on? I'm really surprised that there's not more research going on in the Mid-Pleistocene of Africa, and I'd like to see that happen, too.

BW: Is there a topic that you would like to touch on that we haven't brought up?

LA: Yes, and it goes way back. When I was a child, I had a very bad speech impediment, and it was a real uphill fight for me to go into a teaching profession. In fact, when I first went for my junior college teaching credential way back during the 1960s, when I was trying to support myself, I was actually turned down because I stuttered.

BW: Well, that makes two of us!

LA: I haven't grown out of it completely. When I'm nervous I still stutter a bit. One thing that stands out to me was that in the UK you'd frequently get calls from the BBC or ITV to talk about fossils that had been found. I always used to turn these things down, but what changed things was when Steve Jones, who is a geneticist at UCL, invited me to the dinner after his inaugural lecture. I happened to sit next to a woman producer from the BBC who said "Can I contact you to come and talk about human evolution on the BBC?" And I said, "No, absolutely not." I explained to her my reticence about speaking publicly, and she said, "Well, don't worry." She said, "Come and we'll do a radio bit for you, and if you stammer, we can always cut it out!" So I decided, okay, why not? Apparently, I did okay, because they kept asking me back. It was overcoming something and helping to build confidence. But the first years I was teaching in California, I used to come home in tears. I found it extremely stressful.

BW: Well, as they say, you've come a long way since then!

LA: Well, we all have! How long have we known each other? Since 1975? That's 50 years.

BW: So there are these two white-haired people having a conversation. I think it will be very helpful to young people to understand how careers that look inevitable, are contingent on a whole lot of things.

LA: Yes, if I hadn't decided to come to the UK, I probably would've had a happy life in the States, but it would've been entirely different.

BW: Many thanks for your time: I much appreciate it.

LA: Well, it has been fun.