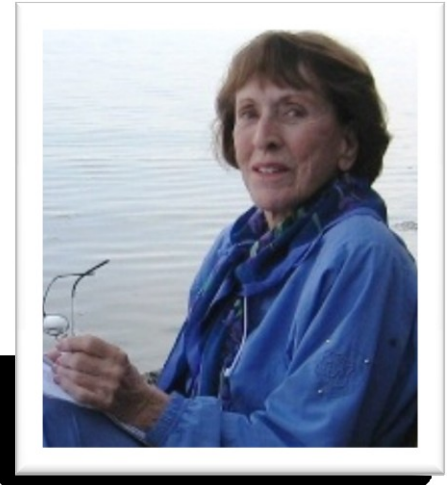


What fields did you teach at George Washington University for over forty years?

In 1968, after I completed my PhD, at UCLA, in Medical Sociology and Management of Complex Organizations, I moved to George Washington University in Washington, DC to teach undergraduate and graduate students. For many years, I taught in Columbian College and in the Business School; directed many dissertations in these fields; and received multiple research grants in both fields. I retired as Professor Emerita, one of the first women.

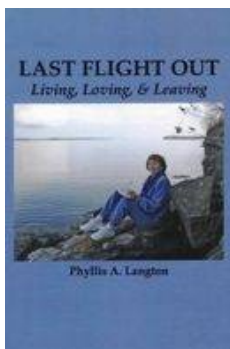


What inspired you to become a nurse?

In 1948-1950, I worked after high school and summers, at the Free Hospital for Women in Brookline Massachusetts. My jobs ranged from cleaning up the kitchen, serving food to patients, making beds, and helping patients with simple tasks. My patients keep telling me I should be a nurse because I made them feel better. One patient's husband bought me a book on nursing. At that time, nurses had to be eighteen to enter nursing school because the law required nurses to be twenty-one to practice. I was sixteen.

Because there was a crucial shortage of nurses in the country in 1950, the Methodist Hospital in Los Angeles proposed an experimental three-year program that would admit students under eighteen. When my Methodist minister heard of this, he offered to sponsor me for that program. He knew of my need for a job after high-school graduation, and of my nursing experience.

I was accepted and moved from Boston to Los Angeles after I graduated high school. I had no parents to pay for my college. But the nursing school offered me a scholarship. This changed my life. I graduated in 1953 and have been active since then. For many years I was a Red Cross Disaster Nurse, and Volunteer Chairman of the Nursing and Health Services, Washington, D.C. I take my required credits to renew my license which is valid until 2019. I will be a nurse forever giving back to my community when needed.



What do you hope your reader takes away from reading your first memoir: Last Flight Out?

We aren't comfortable talking about death and dying, but these topics are always there, including hiding death from children. George was told he had six months to live after being diagnosed with ALS-also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. He lived three years. To live well with a fatal illness, we have to know the quality of life and death we want and how to talk about these wishes with our families. Only then can we share the care.

George wanted to die at home. Grandchildren visited and wanted to care for Grandpa George. Our love grew to a more intimate place than could be imagined, by sharing the journey of facing death together.

What kind of books do you like to read?

Memoirs, Health and Illness, Historical novels

Do you have any hobbies?

I have devoted my life to two hobbies that have been the joy of my life for many years: rescuing and improving the lives of abandoned children and animals. I was abandoned at birth by my mother at a Salvation Army Home in 1933. I was raised motherless, fatherless and homeless. But for the great care and support of the churches and other community groups, I would not have survived: the subject of my memoir SWEET ABANDON.

I used to find abandoned and hurt animals when I walked home from school. I would take them to neighbors, ring doorbells and give them the animals. Some people would take them. Others would close the door in my face. As a child, I didn't understand why they wouldn't help a sick animal.

What was your memorable moment in your teaching career?

One of the many memorable moments in my teaching career was my retirement party. It was hard for me to retire because I loved my work so much, my colleagues, and the many students who had become family as their careers progressed. So many former students travelled from afar with their families to celebrate the over forty years of some of the greatest experiences I have had in my life.

During those years with them, we developed lasting friendships and new family bonds that continue to grow today as I attend weddings, births, other gatherings that reinforce our bonds. From an orphan with no family, I have been deeply blessed by the associations I experienced, and continue to experience as Professor Emerita at George Washington University.

Do you have any pets?

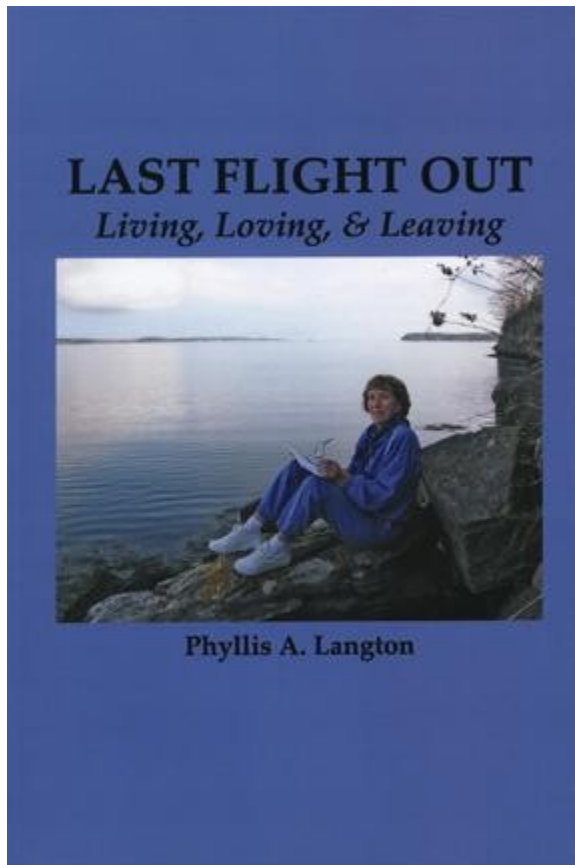
I just finished volunteering at the Asheville Humane Society for two years. I was not able to have a pet where I was living. At this time I am in the process of adopting a two year old, 67-pound English Bulldog. He is a rescue dog from Hurricane Harvey. Our family is a great pet family, and volunteer with several organizations.

Where can readers reach you to ask questions or purchase signed copies of your books?

They can reach me on my gmail: phyllis.langton@gmail.com. I don't have signed copies. The book is available at Amazon in paperback and kindle formats.

Do you have a website?

Yes. phyllisalangton@gmail.com



How do you live the rest of your life when your doctor says, “You have Lou Gehrig’s disease, you probably have six months to live. Go out and have fun, do all the things you’ve wanted to do while you still can and prepare to die?”

Americans continue to fear death and dying. Comedian Woody Allen said, “I’m not afraid of death, I just don’t want to be there when it happens.” Phyllis Langton’s memoir, *Last Flight Out: Living, Loving, & Leaving*, is a passionate love story, one that deepens as she and her husband George Thomas live their way into the experience of ALS, its unremitting losses and its surprising gifts, with dignity, keen humor, a fighter pilot’s courage and a nurse’s unsentimental pragmatism.

“I know what’s going to be on my death certificate. That’s more than you can say,” George tells her after receiving his diagnosis. How they are going to live the time that remains to them as a couple is also not in question, for they are equally committed to savoring every minute, respecting George Thomas's choices about what makes for a meaningful life, a meaningful death.

Supporting her husband's wishes is a moral as well as emotional choice on Langton's part, and definitely not always an easy one. As a medical sociologist, she invites her readers into an open discussion of some of these choices through a thoughtful discussion guide.

AMAZON: http://www.amazon.com/Last-Flight-Out-Living-Leaving/dp/0982726228/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1424020775&sr=1-1&keywords=last+flight+out+by+phyllis+langton

BARNES & NOBLE: <http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/last-flight-out-phyllis-a-langton/1104535346?ean=9780982726228>

PUBLISHER: <http://www.universaltable.org/bookstore.html>

Advance Praise for Last Flight Out

"Phyllis Langton has had as illustrious a career as anyone in academia, but she has taken infinite pains now to write a different kind of book. Her story of her husband's life with and death from ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease) yields many a valuable lesson, but this lesson above all: that dying, whatever its pains, can be both a negative and a positive experience. Here love and mortality, laughter and sorrow are all but inseparable, and their inseparability may help lessen a reader's fear of death and dying. Anyone who enjoys a deeply moving story will want to read this wondrous, indispensable book, and anybody who faces adversity, that is to say everybody, will need to read it."

Jeffery Paine—author of *Father India*, *Re-enchantment*, *Adventures with the Buddha*, and *Tales of Wonder* (with Huston Smith). Judge for the Pulitzer Prize and former vice-president of the National Book Critics Circle.

"Like many others, I've not been comfortable with the subject of death—the death of my loved ones or myself. How lucky we humans are to have Phyllis Langton's story as part of our lives. This moving book has allowed me to look death in the eye, and even find a way to laugh about it. Langton shows us that deep love and laughter make the sorrow and loss bearable, paving the way for this ultimate journey and beyond. . . ."

Jill Breckenridge—author of *The Gravity of Flesh* and *Miss Priss and the Con Man*.

"I couldn't put Last Flight Out down. I wanted it to go on so I could learn more about Phyllis and George and their story about facing ALS together. George had a terminal disease and he and Phyllis chose to live and love to the fullest! What an incredible message to read especially with a disease that takes and takes."

Sharon J. Matland, R.N., M.B.A.—Vice-President of Patient Services, The ALS Association

"Who would have thought that disease can be a page-turner? But Phyllis Langton's bittersweet memoir of her fighter-pilot husband's last years shows that a good marriage can be as joyous in sickness as it is in health. Last Flight Out is a vivid, sparkling story about facing death with grace and high spirits."

Mark Weston—author of *Giants of Japan* and *Prophets and Princes: Saudi Arabia From Muhammad to the Present*.

"Last Flight Out really touched my heart. As the hospice physician who cared for George, I found the description of the denial of his symptoms extremely compelling and riveting and it taught me to appreciate more deeply the psychological defenses which patients use to protect themselves against the perception of their own vulnerabilities. In addition, this memoir reminds all who read it of the paramount need to honor and respect a patient's wishes to control the conditions of care and medical treatment. George

achieved a wonderful peace of mind as his disease relentlessly progressed. Everyone should be so fortunate to have such a resourceful and loving advocate for their partner."

Dr. Henry Willner—Hospice Physician and Palliative Care Consultant, Capital Hospice.