

Leticia Kent

An Oral History Interview
Conducted for the GVSHP Preservation Archives
by
Vicki Weiner and Anthony Wood

New York, New York

October 8, 1997

ABSTRACT

Leticia Kent (1928-1999) was an esteemed freelance journalist and long time Villager. This oral history was conducted in anticipation of an interview Kent was scheduled to conduct with Jane Jacobs on behalf of the Greenwich Village Society's Oral History project.

Although part of this oral history involves a discussion of the logistics and stratagems related to the Jacobs' interview, much time is also spent talking about Kent's personal recollections of the preservation battles in the Village during the 1960s. Among the topics covered are the community's opposition to the proposed Lower Manhattan Expressway and the creation of artists' housing in the West Village. In addition, Kent also describes her role with the political reform movement, the Village Independent Democrats [VID].

The interview itself concludes with a brief review of procedures for the Jacobs' interview and a discussion of the need to preserve the personal papers of key preservationists.

INTERVIEWEE: Leticia Kent
INTERVIEWERS: Vicki Weiner and Anthony Wood
LOCATION: Salmagundi Club, New York, New York
DATE: 8 October 1997
TRANSCRIBER: Tara Sad

WEINER: Great, well, what I have in my notes is “talk to Leticia about the logistics and hardware” and we’ve gone through the instruction sheet. It’s now, you can see, it’s recording and it’s blinking a little bit—

KENT: Right

WEINER: —which shows you that it’s working. [To Wood:] We’ve armed her [Kent] with two tapes of a hundred and twenty and a hundred minutes. I think we’ll have her take this one and some extra batteries and made it as light and easy to travel with as possible.

KENT: Yeah, well, that’s good. The other thing, Erik Wensberg was telling me that at one point somebody showed Jane [Jacobs] a model, by Rose Associates, of how the West Village was going to look and she got a look at that and that I should ask her about that.

WOOD: I wonder

WEINER: This is a model made by the developer?

KENT: Yeah, by the developer.

WOOD: And for the whole re-entitlement project? I wonder when that might have been.

KENT: Even the VID at Wagner had a role in lifting the designation, but Jane was the chief strategist.... The whole neighborhood really worked together, but she was the chief strategist. But her house, she had a kitchen with a translucent glass window, and if the light was on you could come in, there was no [privacy]. Poor Bob...

WOOD: Some of the old clippings, you see his name a lot too, in some of the issues.

KENT: Oh, yes, he was I think on the parks, the planning of the parks....

WOOD: That will be terrific....

KENT: You know, what happens I think (at least this is my own idea) is that a lot of people pay lip service to Jane but they don't really understand what she was about. But after these things were accomplished then they all said, "Me too." But a lot of them were very—including Mary [Nichols]—were disruptive and just didn't really understand because they were liberal ideologs who hadn't really examined what was being put forth. People had to change their ideas sort of [because of Jane] and they think that they thought urban renewal was a good, right.

WOOD: You really get the sense that she really was the wise person on the mount top that everyone's going to for advice for years in the Village, that she was really kind of the strategist....

KENT: I think one of the things that happened is that she did not study architecture. Bob was an architect, she was a writer, I think, with OWI [Office of War Information]. And when she left OWI, I think Doug Haskell at *Architectural Forum* was tired of architects who couldn't write; he wanted writers maybe [laughs] who could tell about architecture. So he sent Jane out, she's very observant, you know, and the architects would tell her about what the project was going to be like. Then she'd come back and see it wasn't like that.

So, as I recall it, she went to the, I think it was the Rockefeller Foundation, just to suggest that a book be done and they said, "You do it." She took a very small grant that didn't require kinds of important people to give their assent, because I think some of the Rockefellers would not have done that. [Chuckles] I think it was Chadwick Keopatrik [sic?] who was the man that she dealt with. But, anyway, and that's just the way it was.

You know Michael Kimmelman went up to Toronto, the chief art critic of the *New York Times*, went up to Toronto to interview Jane one time and he likened her to Miss Marple.... But she is very bright, and one of the best self-educated people I've ever met. There isn't anything she hasn't read.

WOOD: I should have run across this somewhere, but it didn't stick in my memory: when did she come to the Village and did she become active simultaneously, do you know?

KENT: Well, I think she came with her sister, but we'll ask her. I think they had an apartment near the West Village, she and her sister. 'cause I think she did take some courses at Columbia and wrote a, I don't know if it was a thesis or a small book or whatever, and took various courses 'cause she didn't want to be bored, I think. She just wanted to study what she wanted to study. She's just an incredibly observant person. You know, she reasoned that organized agriculture came after

cities and all of the anthropologists said, you know, “Fickle.” And now they’ve found evidence that in fact that was true but she reasoned it out. And now in their journals they give her credit. [Laughs]

WOOD: Well, at least it’s nice that she’s finally being recognized for it. Some of these people—

KENT: Well, I think what Jane would prefer is, I’m not sure, but I think what she would prefer, because I certainly could never speak for her, is that if people would do things differently....

WOOD: Yeah, right, like, “Don’t just tell me I’m great, do what I say.”

Well, this is gonna be so terrific ‘cause you, I mean if you can imagine, but hardly a conversation we had with anyone without her name coming up. But then people are always, well, memories fade, no one’s quite sure of what actually was the role that this played and that’s where our questions of these wonderful organizations that were popping up in the Village and questions of, “Are they all talking to each other?”

KENT: No, like, the VID was very much for the urban renewal project in the West Village until finally they realized—

WOOD: Has anyone written anything that you are aware of, whether it’s an article or a small book or anything on the politics of the Village? I mean the VID just from a pure political reform.

KENT: I really don’t know, I don’t know.

WOOD: Because it's one of the things in all these preservation stories do get entwined with the VID, with DeSapio. There are these events happening in this larger political climate and we're, I don't want to say totally ignorant, but we're under informed.

KENT: Well, for example, Mary Nichols thought the Lower Manhattan Expressway would be good because it would wipe out certain Mafia influences. [Laughs] So I mean, you just don't know. And then Tony Dapolito said to me that he was really surprised that we realized that the area he lived in, which he thought was a slum, was important.

WEINER: I just interviewed him and he expressed that. He was surprised and thrilled.

KENT: Yes, right. But he was very useful in lots and lots of things and he loves to tell you that a lot of the official versions are not true. Even the ones that I thought were true, because behind the scenes he was doing this, that or the other.

WOOD: Yeah. I tell you the more I dig into these types of topics the more I believe that it was the phone call from X to Y calling in a favor. That it had had nothing totally to do with the issue that—

KENT: But Tony realized that Jane was right I think quite early on and so that was good. He wasn't an enemy that she had to fight at least as I can remember.

WOOD: [To Weiner:] Have you mentioned the Greenwich Village Study, at all, to her [Kent]?

WEINER: Not really.

WOOD: [To Kent:] One of the things we're just interested in learning more about, to see what role if any it played was this Greenwich Village Study project that Stanley Tankel was pulling together. 'cause I know there was one letter we found that was a letter from Stanley Tankel to somebody in I think it was 1956. He was writing at Jane's suggestion because this person might be able to provide space or some sort of support for this Greenwich Village project.

KENT: Well, I don't know. But anyway I know that Jane and Stanley were often at odds.

WOOD: Yeah, I would expect them to be.

KENT: But, you know, we loved him because he was a neighbor and a friend.

WOOD: Well, when you say "at odds," it's interesting in the sense that there're certain—

KENT: Philosophically at odds

WOOD: —there are certain issues in the Village that people seem to be able to disagree on and remain friends. And then there're certain other ones where we've discovered, well, we didn't discover, we've learned, of a fight twenty years ago and the people have never talked since and it wasn't a personal—it was over an issue, it was, and I think that the whole DeSapio thing seems to be the one that led—

KENT: Well that's the other thing; I think that's sort of narrow-minded. The whole idea was to keep the roadway from going through the park, not to take these partisan positions and be so intransigent in them.

WOOD: They can break out of that.

KENT: Yes

WEINER: I think it seems like the political ramifications of events like that, they kind of reverberated in the community. We also wondered how that affected the groups, what happened to the many groups that were started after the event around which the group formulated was over. You know, what happened to the group? Where did people go?

KENT: I don't know really, but I know in the West Village they had a real—if a stranger came in and was doing something bad, there really was a little pipeline there.

WOOD: Well, maybe when you talk to Jane you can get her sense of this: one of things that struck me and it may once again be just because we don't have the whole picture, but you see these very strong grass root groups, appear to be strong—Save the Village and some others. And at a certain moment you would have expected, you would have thought maybe there would have been either a super group that grew, a stronger group combining them. And one of the things we've seen is a lot of the leaders particularly at, say, Save the Village, ended up on the Community Board. The Village's Community Board is probably, if you would look historically, one of the strongest at that time, say the sixties and seventies, and was maybe one of the strongest most informed community boards at least on land use

issues you could find anywhere. My working theory at the moment is that a lot of the talent that had been out in organizational groups had got on to the Community Board and that became the vehicle of the Village for a lot of issues that in other communities, a broader neighborhood association—

KENT: Maybe, but I think that Jane was involved in the artists' housing with Rachele Wall, I think. A lot of those things didn't really grow out of the planning board, but then—

WOOD: I'm thinking of some of the zoning changes, zoning reform stuff and the ongoing interest in landmark stuff once the district [historic district] was formed....

One interesting thing that we didn't put on our list of things is asking Jane what she, if she's got any in her own papers, whether she's got photographs or even—

KENT: I doubt it, but I think she's given her papers to Boston College.

WOOD: Did she? Well that would be useful, too.

KENT: Yeah, and they've, I think, organized them. She told me.

WEINER: So they catalogued them?

KENT: Yeah, they did.

WOOD: That's useful to know, 'cause one of the things we're also interested is trying to, and I think there's so many ways you can help people understand the past and clearly the oral history stuff is so important but also objects from that time,

whether it's, fliers from rallies, photographs, things that people can kind of really help them understand the times.

KENT: Well, I remember one thing that they did in the West Village. They had an audio engineer there and they went and they measured how quiet all the important areas were like Sutton Place, you know. And they discovered that the West Village was quieter than all these—

WOOD: Than a lot of places. Yeah, I love it.

KENT: And they made a graph, you know. And they went down to City Hall (I can't remember what kind of hearing it was) and Murray Kempton was there. I remember he did an article on it, because he was so taken with it. Of course, he changed some of the figures—to our horror. [Laughs]

WOOD: [Laughs] Well, that's good about her papers at Boston College, that's very useful.... You think that would be, would cover the Village period, would include papers from that period?

KENT: I really don't know, I don't know, I'd have to ask Jane.

WOOD: Well, that would be very useful to know. I am also thinking if there are any photographs, 'cause it would be wonderful to have....

KENT: I just don't think Jane has any photographs....

WOOD: Is there anything else lurking out there like that we should know that we don't....

KENT: I don't know, Jane would....

WOOD: Well, did you go over these questions at all? You may want to look at them and get back to us either now or later. These are not the definitive list, but were things that, as we've been doing research and as we've been talking to people these were among the things that came up and we thought might help trigger her thinking on some of the things that we're interested in. Then, of course, since we don't know all that she was involved with, we may totally miss some key chapters and we're hoping that she would obviously fill us in.

WEINER: One group that actually, in the question about all the different groups, was the Greenwich Village Association, which Tony Dapolito talks about a lot. And that may be one to also include in the list of groups, the GVA, which is how everybody refers to it....

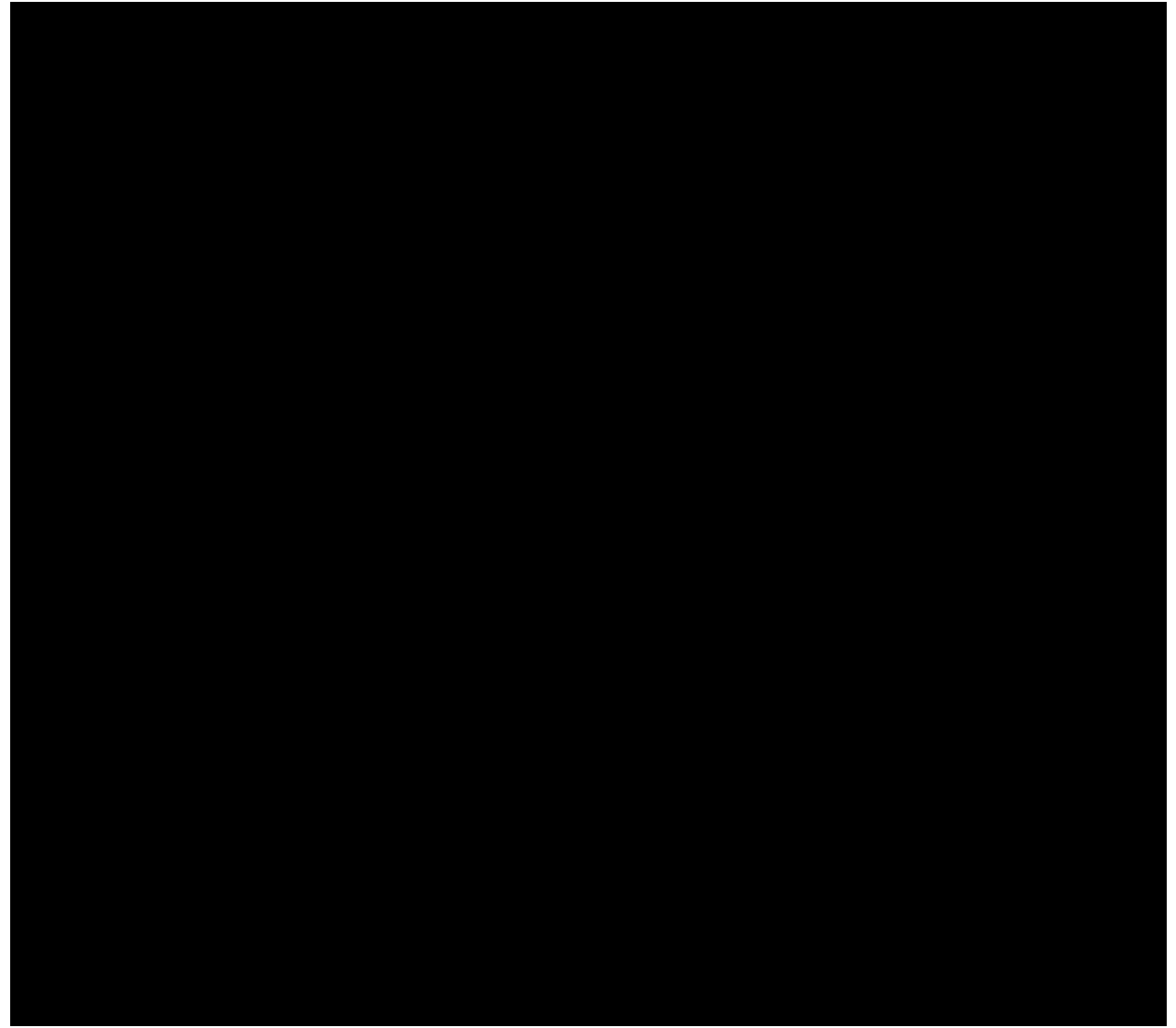
KENT: Well, as I say, I really think that the innovative work didn't come out of those organizations....

WOOD: Well, that would be interesting to get her take on the role of the groups verses what really was going on.

KENT: Yeah right, I think that would be really good.

WEINER: Yeah, it would be great, because we're getting so much information about the groups themselves it's hard to know the perspective....

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WOOD: One of the chapters we are really interested in, and Jane can be very helpful, is trying to really understand what this Greenwich Village Study was, which at least we've heard it's something that he [Stanley] was playing a leadership role in.... It sounded like it was an idea that was coming together to kind of look holistically—

KENT: But you know what Jane thinks of plans? She says they're fixed ideas.

WOOD: Well, how was she linked into it [the study] and then clearly, it also seems to have gotten sidetracked into particular issues. All of a sudden it, I think it got really flipped into the whatever iteration the park might—

KENT: No, but I think that what you brought up might be one of the most interesting things about what the organizations verses how it really happened.

WOOD: 'cause often times the organizations can help with one political dynamic while the real agenda is elsewhere, the people behind it.

KENT: I remember one time, when Mayor Wagner, it was around Christmas, and Mayor Wagner was coming to the VID. I don't know whether I was working for the *Voice* or whether I was just by my own choice a lobbyist against the urban renewal project in the West Village. And the mayor's car stopped and he rolled down the window and he asked if I knew where the VID was. I said, yes, I did and I gave him the most circuitous directions that you can image, that I was sure that would take about ten minutes. Then I ran upstairs and I asked various people if they would raise their hands and ask Mayor Wagner if he would lift the designation in the West Village. So he came to the VID and he thought that was on the minds of everyone. I'm not saying it was, I'm not saying it was definitive but— [laughs]

WEINER: It's a great strategy: give him the long way around, run upstairs—

KENT: We all did—Jane really, really was the strategist—but we all did things like that sound engineer. I mean Murray Kempton's around there looking for—you can never give Murray Kempton an idea, he had to find one. And he would often focus over there, find it over there, and it really grabbed at me. They did all kinds of

things and also it cost so much less than other forces, I mean what they must have spent verses what “we” spent.

WOOD: Well, to me, always one of the great inequities in these battles is that those who are pushing the bad projects, whether it’s government or developer, to them it’s all billable hours. It’s a budget line. Whereas the community that’s fighting it it’s all blood, sweat and tears.

KENT: I remember one time Barbara Reese said to Jane, she said, “I know you’re that not doing this because your house is in the area.” And Jane said, “You’ve got to have rocks in your head.” Or at least she thought that; I don’t know if she said it: “That’s exactly why I’m doing it. It’s not some altruistic idea, it’s my house.”

[Laughs]

WOOD: Well, this is gonna be so helpful, we’re so excited you’re gonna do this for us because it’s a pain—

KENT: Well, I don’t know what I’m gonna be able to remember but Jane and I have worked together. I did an interview of her for the *New York Times*, a big long one on the occasion of *The Economy of Cities*. And then I did, I’ve done several. I think I did one for *Vogue* called, “More babies needed and not fewer.” [Chuckles] So she asked me if I would do this because I guess she feels comfortable and I also understand her point of view, because I’ve known her for a long time. I’ve known her since I was about 17 or 18. When I first came to New York, I just happened to meet Jane and Bob. Jimmy, their son, is 49 now, was six months old and they sort of adopted me, you know. I’m probably a slow learner, but Jane taught me a lot.

[Chuckles]

But, anyway, I've interviewed lots of people, Nobel Laureates, movie stars, directors, so it's no problem.

WOOD: We've got an expert on our hands.

KENT: Well, no not really.... But Jane is, she's good at this herself. You know she was an editor, and she worked for Time Inc. She worked on *Architectural Forum*, she was an editor, she worked for the Office of War Information, so she kind of understands—and she has great respect for the truth.

WOOD: Well, that's what we're trying get at through the fog of time, memory and press releases from the past. But getting her taped as we said on the roles of the—

KENT: She really taught all those people, even Ed Koch. I mean all of those people are indebted to her.... For example, one time for Lower Manhattan Expressway there was a public hearing and Jane said, "I wonder what would happen if there were no tape." All of a sudden everyone gets up and they march on the stage, they tear up the tape, thinking that there would be no public hearing. The police zero in and arrest Jane, you know. [Laughs] Well, of course she got off, but it was terrible.

WOOD: Being so active in the community and being so passionate and so involved takes its toll.

KENT: Oh, I think so, yeah.

WOOD: Was that part of the reason for leaving the city?

KENT: No, it wasn't, no it wasn't. Her boys had told her and Bob that they would not be drafted, they would not go to Vietnam. I don't think Jane wanted to leave, but Bob said, "I'm not gonna be sitting here working in an office and have my boys in jail." So they went to Canada before the boys were 18 and they were registered in Draft Board 100 which had no quota. When they went there, Bob, as it happened, began to work for a really good firm and they loved it there and the Canadians loved them and some of them are citizens or maybe all of them are Canadians now. I think Jane really didn't want to go, but they just felt that they didn't want their children to go to jail and so that's why they left.

WOOD: Well, it's also gonna be interesting to get her take on some of the people who were players who have died and people, names like, Robert Weinberg's name comes up a lot in some of these issues and it'll be interesting to get her take.

KENT: Well, she worked with all these people, but again I think Bob Weinberg he was useful in some ways. Some ways he was really an obstructionist.

WOOD: Well, that's exactly what will be interesting to hear.

KENT: But my sense of it is that people began to realize how brilliant Jane was and they began to learn from her.... And you asked people, "Did you read the *Death and Life of Great American City*?" They don't have to; it's been absorbed into the culture. [Chuckles] It's not true that you don't have to, but anyway.

WOOD: Well speaking of being absorbed, it will also be interesting if indeed Jane, in a sense that she was the one who planted some of the ideas that they translated into—

KENT: Well, she did. I saw, when Mary Nichols died, her obit in the *Voice*, they gave her credit for everything that Jane did. [Laughs] But what the hell, I mean you know I was sort of offended by that, because it was inaccurate.

WOOD: Well, there's an awful lot of it, I have to say.

KENT: I didn't mind Mary getting credit, but I thought that was a little bit much.

WOOD: Excessive. Another name that's on here to ask her about is Dianne Arthur Holden. I don't know if that's a name that'll—

KENT: Well, I just sort of remember that, but I don't remember—

WOOD: Well, he was I guess an architect/planner, who was involved in planning exercises not on behalf of the City, though, always on behalf of neighborhood groups. And did some plans and is credited with having written a version, an early version of the landmarks law that was so incomprehensible that it helped bring real lawyers, lawyers into the picture, because he had just garbled something. But it would be interesting to know if she had any memories—

KENT: The idea that all of these plans are what did it I don't think it is true. The Village was so vibrant and there were so many interesting people here. I mean people came here because it was interesting, they didn't come here, Bernice Abbott didn't come to the Village, you know—

WOOD: Accidentally.

KENT: No, but they came here. And I don't know, we'll have to ask Jane why she came to the Village, I mean probably for the same reason.

WOOD: In a sense, the Village has attracted the type of people it needed to protect it in a sense, maybe. It will be interesting to get her take. She's studied a lot of communities and knows so much about grass roots and communities.

KENT: For example, I spent half the time in Palm Beach and half the time in New York. I was born and brought up in Palm Beach, but I fled because I was a blank tattler upon which nothing was written. But anyway they have a mayor there, Nancy Graham, and she must be just doing it straight according to Jane Jacobs. She has mixed uses now—apartments over the stores. She brought back the whole downtown. She turned the one-way streets into two-way. She stopped most of the parking meters. And just did small things. She started a green market on Saturday, by actually, you know it was phony in the beginning, but she went and bought the vegetables.

WOOD: [Laughs] A Potemkin green market!

KENT: Yeah. And the *Times* wrote an article on her. But they never would have thought of those things but for Jane, you know. And it's really interesting, it's worked. I mean I am just amazed.

WOOD: Well, the whole idea that smaller is better, that small steps can have major impacts as opposed to needing the huge approach.

KENT: Oh, sure. And anyway you find, I think that a lot of those plans are somebody there wants to make a buck and doesn't really care about the good of the community. And that's really a Trojan horse, so—

WOOD: That's certainly the case. Well, one question we put in here, which will be interesting to see what it leads to, is really one to try to get her to talk about NYU and it is a force inflicted in one sense.

KENT: Does it say that here? Is there a question here?

WOOD: There's a question to trigger, it's a broad question, it's in the middle of the second page. The real purpose of that question is to get her going on NYU and her memories and her take and frankly a lot of these questions are really designed to try and get her mind at a certain point and see what it brings out.

KENT: Yeah, well, don't be surprised if she harrumphs about a lot these things.

WOOD: Well, no, I actually think it would be terrific if she kind of looks at this and says, "Boy, the premise behind this question is total lunacy" and sets us straight. That would be the most useful thing she could do.

WEINER: Or if the questions inspire other things that she just wants to talk about. We found that with a lot of the interview subjects that the question did not really hit them but it sort of sent them in a different direction and that's fine.

WOOD: She should feel free to answer the question she wished we had asked, as opposed to the one we did. [Chuckles]

KENT: Well, I'm sure she will. There's that whole West Village thing and the whole meat market thing and then the Rockefeller plan actually all the way up.

Oh, have you spoken with the woman whose been fighting the Lower Manhattan Expressway? She's very good. What's her name? Marcy Benstock.

WOOD: We have been, for reasons of opportunity, we are going to the oldest stories first because we're afraid of frankly losing people.

KENT: But you know Marcy, the *Wall Street Journal* was so offended by the way Marcy Benstock was treated that they actually gave her an opportunity to express her point of view and it really was very—

WOOD: Remarkable

KENT: She's very well educated and very sensible.

WOOD: Oh, Marcy's an incredible force and a clear intellect in a lot of this.

KENT: I think she also is pretty accurate. I mean I think she has a very good retentive memory about what happened when.

WOOD: Well, that's good

KENT: Erik Wensberg's another one, but he's so busy all the time.

WOOD: He's someone that we should sit and talk to.

KENT: You know, it depends on how your memory is but he has a very precise—and he was an editor and a writer.

WOOD: I think what we really need is people with memories.

KENT: He was the editor of the *Columbia University Forum*, which was the foremost, college or university literary quarterly before it was abandoned by Columbia. He's a little impatient but he's very, very precise and he speaks beautifully.

WOOD: Well, we're looking for two types of people: people with incredible memories and people who are pack rats. Those seem to be our most productive payoffs. We get the paper trail from one and the memories from the other, and that's how we're trying to patch things together.

KENT: Margot [Gayle] must have had a lot of tales to tell you.

WOOD: Margot had a lot of tales, though Margot has—Margot's wonderful, I have actually talked to Margot on a lot of these topics over time and Margot's talked about some of them so often that it doesn't trigger new memories.

KENT: Oh, yeah.... But I think it was rather brilliant to get the clock working.

WOOD: Oh, well, that whole notion, talk about the Trojan Horse, foot in the door, give an inch, take a mile sort of approach to advocacy....

KENT: On the other hand, speak to Grace Paley, about the Women's House of Detention.... She thought that was better than the garden.... And in a way she's

right—I mean who’s gonna go to all the way to Riker’s Island? I remember one time almost getting arrested with Jane. We went down to protest an air raid and the shelter was, I kid you not, under the canopy at Longchamps. [Laughs] So, you know, we wouldn’t take shelter and then Jane was pushing the paddy wagon and I looked at the paddy wagon and said, “I’m going and pulling her out,” saying, “Officer, we will take shelter under protest.” Jane’s trying to pull me in, I’m trying to pull her out. Anyway, we didn’t go to jail, but I was so ashamed, that the people who did go to jail all of them were good people and who instituted like getting good newspapers in the prisons and certain reforms. But yeah Grace Paley would be an interesting one to speak to. She’s up in Vermont, you know, where Bob is....

WOOD: We’re willing to travel. [Chuckles]

KENT: She’s got a really good take on— And she’s very fair-minded. When I was at the *Voice* I once assigned her to report on the Pentagon, you know that Pentagon march [in the late 1960s]. I thought, of course, that she would be very close to it, that is she would take the side of the protesters, but she did a piece about the frightened boys who were there defending the Pentagon as well as the people.

It was a beautiful piece. You know, she’s really good.... She’d probably be wonderful, from a different, from a literary point of view from a different point of view. But she has a wonderful story about going to the Woman’s House of Detention that she read aloud last year at town hall, at Farrar, Straus and Giroux [Publishers] anniversary celebration. And it was all about being in the Women’s House of Detention. It was wonderful.

WOOD: Other people whose names come to mind, that we would be—?

KENT: I don’t know, but when I talk to Jane I’m sure lots will come up.

WOOD: If she also has any sense of other people who, like her, have given papers to libraries or collections. One of the things we're trying to do is not get everything in one place but have one place where somebody could go who is interested in these topics and who discover that, oh, Jane's papers are here and Margot's got some papers here or there. Ultimately, we'll collect some papers that don't have other homes, but as long as one knows where they are, then it's great for people...

KENT: One time, I don't know whether it was Jane's idea or what, during the West Village fight, we all went down to City Hall and we X'd out our glasses. You know, that's how they use to mark the buildings that were gonna be demolished. I remember that they said we rioted. All we did was stand up and say, "For shame." Or something like that, you know, and then it was just amazing, it was so effective and so moving that people who were opposed to saving the West Village were just driven mad, you know.

WOOD: How do you "X" out glasses—with the tape?

KENT: Tape or something, yeah. And everybody came. Even when they were demonstrating up in— I mean you never know in New York. They were demonstrating against the building that was gonna be at Columbus Circle because it was gonna throw a terrific shadow on the park and they took the umbrellas—

WOOD: Right, for the shadow. That was great.

KENT: And do you know what the motto was? "Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men? The *Shadow* knows." [Laughs] You're maybe too young to know what that means.

WOOD: No, no, no, I know the reference.

WEINER: That's pretty great, and creative

WOOD: Oh yeah, one of the things certainly the Village is probably the top of the list of is communities that have found ways to vividly demonstrate about and issue and bring it home. I mean pictures of that strange—what do they call it?—the Loconik

WEINER: The Loconik, the Salvador Dali-designed train.

WOOD: Yeah, the Salvador Dali-designed train that went down to a hearing and then, just—

KENT: I don't think I knew about that.

WOOD: This was tied in I think to the zoning amendment changes in '59 and '60 and some of the activities around that. But really kind of brilliant promotional wizes.

WEINER: Yeah, they got into the press. I mean that's another thing: that there was press coverage of these issues, a lot of it because people were so creative...I mean standing up the X's.

WOOD: Yeah, that's brilliant

KENT: I don't remember if it was Stanley Isaacs, the one Republican City Council member, who said that we rioted, you know. [Laughs] Nobody rioted.

WOOD: They'd had quaint notions didn't they?

WEINER: [Chuckles] Yeah, right, if that's a riot—

WOOD: Well we can't thank you enough for doing this for us.

KENT: I think it will be good.

WOOD: It's so important to try and really get the truth down for the future....

[End of Interview]