

**A C T U P**  
**ORAL HISTORY**  
**P R O J E C T**

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Interviewee: **Kathy Ottersten**

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Interviewer: **Sarah Schulman**

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**ACT UP Oral History Project**  
**Kathy Ottersten**  
**December 28, 2017**

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**SARAH SCHULMAN: So, let's start. So, just tell us your name, your age, today's date, and where we are.**

KATHY OTTERSTEN: Okay. I'm in Fairbanks, Alaska. Kathy Ottersten's my name. I'm fifty-one, and today is December 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017, a year of tragedy.

**SS: Yes, exactly. So where were you born?**

KO: Charlottesville, Virginia, University of Virginia, while my father was in law school.

**SS: Oh, okay. So, you had young parents.**

KO: Yes, I was the first of the clan. I'm the oldest of five, and I thought everybody grew up with a kegger on their front lawn on the weekends. So, I was two when we moved out, but I still have a couple memories.

**SS: So, when you were growing up, were you raised with any kind of sense of community or community responsibility? Like, did your parents belong to organizations or to a church or something like that?**

KO: Deeply. It's not a religious thing. My father was involved in Irish nationalism. His grandmother — within the family, we have the immigrants. Within living memory, I knew them. And so, there were connections back to cousins in England and Ireland, and to the point where he tried to learn Gaelic. He was pathetic at it.

There was a strong suspicion in the family that my father was part of NORAID [Irish Northern Aid Committee], which was sort of money-moving wing of Sinn Féin and the IRA, because he was outraged by the brutality after the massacres early in the troubles in the sixties and seventies. So, when I was a kid, we marched and held the

banners in parades, Irish nationalist parades in various places. But also, there was the sense that you did things. So, if the church was holding — let me say it like this. My father was an ethnic Irish Catholic. I think he probably did not believe in God till the day he died. But because of that stuff going on there, interpreted over here, and so you go for a church drive, you volunteer wherever we were, because we moved very frequently then, sometimes every year. But you just did it.

**SS: Was he working for a corporation or something? Is that why you moved so much?**

00:05:00 KO: Yeah. At the time when he left law school, we went for a year up to Boston. He got his master's degree in economics from Northeastern and then got into a Young Executive Program at General Electric, and so every year he would go to a different posting, basically.

**SS: Oh, wow.**

KO: Yeah. And then after nine years of that, or whatever number of years, he got totally sick of it, moved on to somewhere else, because by then he had three children. My mother and he, I believe, at that time still wanted more. I assume so. They got two more. But he wanted someplace where the travel — he was oftentimes gone five days a week, and he wanted that to end, so we planted our stick in Michigan for a few years.

**SS: Do you remember the first time that you applied that value in your own life?**

KO: Yes, absolutely. I was, I think, definitionally probably a precocious kid, so by the time I was fourteen, I was doing my own volunteer work, just helping out,

giving away food with things, you know, separate, where you go into an organization in town and helping distribute. I first left the house when I was sixteen and got involved in working with people at risk and took a year off of high school. That was just on my own volition. My parents weren't thrilled about that, obviously.

And then went back, lived with them for a final year of high school, and then went to college, and as soon as I went to college at Fordham, I was back to doing all that, ran a soup kitchen for a couple days a week in South Bronx. By 1986, when I was – the spring before I turned twenty, I was already getting arrested. That's how I learned nonviolent civil disobedience, from the Catholics.

**SS: Oh, so you started out really in the Catholic Left.**

KO: That's exactly. I was working — well, let me say it this way. My first arrest, I wound up in a jail cell with Daniel Berrigan.

**SS: You learned from the best.**

KO: So, I got to learn from some of the best right off the bat. The Jesuits know what they're doing.

**SS: And how did, like, your queerness, how did that fit into the Catholic Left?**

KO: I was very out about — I'd been taking both male and female lovers since the age of twelve. My oldest friend is my boyfriend from when I was thirteen to sixteen. But I wasn't exclusively with men or women. So that was – my parents knew it, friends knew it. When I went off to college, I was part of the gay and Lesbian, bisexual group on campus that was still outlawed at Fordham up in the Bronx where I was for a couple years. So, when I came into the Left, it was a known thing by them. There was

no question. I was not going back into any closet I might have been in. I wasn't really. So, sort of a heads-up I did to everybody else, I did to them.

**SS: So how did the Catholic Left respond to that?**

KO: It wasn't an issue, at least in that group of people I was working with. It just wasn't a question.

**SS: What about abortion? Just out of curiosity, did that come up for you as a contradiction?**

KO: Yeah, that was a divisive thing for a lot of people, and so if you're working, like I was, on homelessness and peace and justice and stuff, it was just we're going to agree to disagree, basically, at that time. There was an acknowledgement by some people that Operation Rescue and organizations like that where Catholics supported it was absolutely way too far and had no place in civil discussion, and other people had the religious views that it didn't matter; life was life. And it was a difficult thing to sort of sit and say, "We're just not going to address this in this context."

But the flipside was here we were. The getting arrested was down at the McGraw-Hill Building on 42<sup>nd</sup> Street because Reagan's government was doing Star Wars research there, or turning out for anti-CIA stuff, which is what eventually got me thrown out of Fordham, because a bunch of us occupied one of the deans' offices and refused to leave until the CIA stopped recruiting on campus, and we absolutely over time won that fight. So, we had these things to focus on, and we could stay away from these things over here and just agree that's not what this group is for, one of the first times I saw that kind of constructive cooperation.

**SS: So, while you were so deeply involved in all this that you actually got expelled, when did you —**

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KO: Well, I got offered to resign before they expelled me, was the way it was.

**SS: Yeah, but I mean that's a deep level of commitment, and yet at the same time you're having this Queer life. When did you become aware of AIDS, actually?**

KO: Oh, I was well aware of it, since I'd been taking lovers going back for years. I'm born in '66, so I was taking lovers of both genders from late seventies, and so I was very aware of it. It concerned me a lot. What was the incubation period? I knew I was at risk, and so in the late eighties I had already stopped unprotected sex with anybody by that point just because didn't want to put myself at more risk.

**SS: And what was that like in New York? I mean, was it easy to negotiate or was it complex?**

KO: Well, let me say it this way. When I moved back into the city in '85, it was already really raging, and it was in the media, and there was a lot of fear. And by then I had so many other things going on, I was barely dating, and so it was less of a concern for me at that point. And then, you know, once you got more knowledge, it became more important. So, subsequent to that, it was always safe sex. But I was always watching to see what diseases. I like to stay healthy.

**SS: When was the first time that someone close to you was HIV-positive?**

KO: My cousin died of HIV, of AIDS in the eighties. He got it actually — he was one of the people who got it from a transfusion, amazingly. He was somebody who caught pneumonia most every year. He had very weak lungs, and they would transfuse him commonly. And at some point, he got it, and I think he passed in '84 or '85, as I recall.

**SS: And how did your family deal with that?**

KO: Within my family, it was very acknowledged and discussed. My parents weren't ashamed or scared or anything, but they were in some ways more aware because of me, I think, and my experience and having known and actually liked some of my lovers deeply. So, they were much more open and understanding, so there wasn't the shame around AIDS, no matter where it came from. But his parents, my aunt and uncle, were not going to acknowledge it. I believe they said that he died of a heart condition or something, in the paper and in the church service. It was not going to be allowed out, basically, so it was a mixed thing. But you're talking about two people born in the 1920s, his parents.

**SS: Right, right. So, when you were moving more into like a Queer and Trans world and spending more time there, were you becoming more aware of people around you being HIV-positive or having AIDS?**

KO: Well, even before then, running the soup kitchen in the South Bronx in the mid-eighties, you knew people. You knew women who were working on the streets. They were in the line of fire. You knew HIV-positive people who were drug users. You knew people who were gay. It was already something that I saw devastating

that community before I came to ACT UP. So, I was never uncomfortable. It never scared me in that way I think a lot of people had.

**SS: So, what got you to ACT UP?**

KO: I first came to ACT UP just through a couple demonstrations with members of the Catholic Left in 1987, actually. That was how I first heard about it, was through those people, and because they were gay men who were priests, they were gay men who were brothers in the Jesuits that I knew, and it was just, "Here's this activist thing going on. Do you want to go to a demonstration or two?" And, quite frankly, I don't even remember which ones we went to in New York. I was just showing up as a foot soldier off the street, not going to meetings back then.

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So, coming to ACT UP at that point was a functional thing since I was working on these other issues. I was out of the city for 1988, and when I came back in '89, I wasn't going to be a Trans person, as far as I was concerned. I knew what I was, and I'd been through already two minor breakdowns and all kinds of other issues, and so I came back to stick a shotgun in my mouth. My friend John, who was a little drag queen, five-foot-one Debbie Harry impersonator, somewhere in the background at *Wigstock*, in the movie, I called him the night that I stuck the shotgun in my mouth when I took it out, because as I was sitting there, I realized the only reason I was thinking about killing myself was because of everybody else, because I was so sick of humanity. I had no idea of what the hell I was supposed to be and how I was going to get along in just the world around me. And that little realization at that moment, I said, "Oh, fuck everybody." That was it. I just was not going to care what people thought about me anymore. I gave him a call and I said, "You know, you just got to talk to me."

And he talked me down from the ceiling and said, “Why don’t you get on your bike, come on in the city.” At the time, I was actually a full patched member of a motorcycle club semi-outlawed in New Jersey and had a pretty, white custom Harley, and rode on in, stayed with him for a few days. And after that point, I was homeless for the next two and a half years, almost the whole time I was in ACT UP. I either couch surfed, and then later I had a little spot in a friend’s business where I would crawl in at night. But it allowed me to be a full-time activist, and that was the incredible part of it. And it allowed me to sit and say, “Here’s where I’m going.”

So right from that outset, I was back in ACT UP. I stayed with him, and then he and I went to a Monday meeting. He drug me in there a few days later.

**SS: Because, I mean, you were a highly respected member of ACT UP. I mean, you were the facilitator. I mean, you were given this huge responsibility and people listened to you. And I’m just wondering how you got from John taking you back into the meeting to that position of respect. What was the trajectory?**

KO: Well, let me — “position of respect.” I must admit, it’s not that I didn’t feel respected. I never had sort of a desire to be well known per se. At that time, I was just trying to figure out who the hell I was, and when I walked into ACT UP, for me it was, first of all, I just was like, “Okay, there are people here who don’t like me and probably will never like me, but this feels like family.” Big Irish families argue all the time. I’ve been in them. So, it felt like family, it felt like I had permission to try, permission to speak in a way that I’d never had before, and so I opened my mouth and it went from there. That was it. I never felt like people — because, I’ll admit, I was in awe

of all of you. You all were educated, you all knew things, you'd been in the world, and here I was, I was a college dropout. I was somebody who rode with Hell's Angels occasionally. I was working class, working class in that I'd worked on an assembly line by that point. I mean, I had done lawn work for people, I'd cleaned apartments. So, I'm walking into a place where there's socioeconomically — you know, there were people there who were ex-bond traders. I had no experience with that sort of thing. But I still felt like I had permission to talk and permission to speak up and that what I said had value to people, and so I didn't shut up. If that makes sense.

**SS: Yes, totally. Before you became facilitator, because I want to get to that later, but what were some of the other activities that you did in that preliminary period? Were you in affinity groups? Did you work on any campaigns?**

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KO: You know, I was sitting a few years ago and thinking about this as I was working to get healthier a few years ago, and I came into ACT UP — actually I think it was early May when John took me to that meeting.

**SS: Is that May '87?**

KO: Eighty-nine, early May '89. And when I came in, there were demonstrations going on over the summer, and I just dove in. Certainly, the housing stuff I got drawn into early and remained active in the whole time through, and even in 2000 when I was in law school, volunteered at Housing Works, and so that was an immediate affinity for me. So, Charles King and I, I suppose, have more arrests together than not, over those years. Just in terms of timeline, I'm not sure what I got involved in, in terms of affinity groups. I worked with the Media Committee sometimes in terms of just doing

grunt work. I would show up at almost anything. I remember, would call for a zap and I'd be there, you know. You'd sort of go through it. And I remember one down at HPD, a thing where we had the desks out in the street, office furniture, and so there I am on the street getting arrested and chained to a desk or something; I forget. Once I was in, I was in.

**SS: I just want to get back to Housing Works, because as a person who was homeless while you were in ACT UP, I can totally understand why you were connected to Housing Works. So, do you remember anything that you can share with us about the early days of it when it was still a Housing Committee of ACT UP before it became its own agency, like where you guys met and what the issues were?**

KO: Well, the issues were very much about — in fact, actually I should say I was already not as involved by the time it broke off, so the whole time I was involved was when Housing Works is part of it. It was breaking off and being discussed by the time I had to fade back for other reasons. But it really was about just getting something happening. That demonstration at HPD, which was really right at my beginning of it, they gave people, they were supposed to set up this program, but they didn't give them desks or notepads or phones so they could do any work. It was completely illusory. So right at the outset, it was fighting the basic stupidity, the attempt to mollify without doing anything by the city or state, without devoting any resources. It was just like we were just trying to lay the tracks to be able to move forward.

**SS: But how did you guys negotiate the difference between pushing for policy versus becoming a social service agency?**

KO: I wouldn't be able to even tell you, because I was really at a lot of levels a grunt worker, and so I left the smart stuff to people like Charles and Eric [Sawyer] and the rest of them. We met, and you asked about where we met. We met in people's apartments. It was in some ways very ad hoc sometimes because it was "Where are we going to meet? Where do we have space? Let's figure it out." I think sometimes we had a room at the center. It was like so many other things, "It's urgent. We're going to do this. We'll figure out someplace. If we need to go and sit in a park and drink beer out of paper sacks, we will." It just felt emergency.

**SS: Do you remember anyone's apartment, whose apartments you met at?**

KO: Oh, god, I cannot remember their names, and it's been wracking my brain because they lived around the corner from me. They were the two gentlemen who lived at 20 on Ninth Avenue between 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> and had a really lovely little place. And then there was — well, sometimes I think it was Housing Works that sometimes met down at Tony Aran's [Tony Arena] place down near the Port Authority Building, and I think sometimes we met at the old office in the Port Authority Building also if that conference room was available. I do remember meetings up there sometimes. It was just generally around.

**SS: But when you were going to people's homes, I mean, people, as you mentioned earlier, came from so many different kinds of economic backgrounds, like when you're meeting in people's homes, that makes it really clear, right, that people are all over the map?**

KO: Yeah. Oh, yeah. That was never a bother to me. Because my father had been corporate and had chosen to walk away from General Electric, I didn't understand it at the time, but the structure that he was in, he knowingly walked away from seven figures in earnings over his career, potentially eight. And so, I'd been around people who were — how do you want to describe it — not in my socioeconomic group. So that wasn't, I wasn't overawed by people. Education, ability was what awed me a lot of times. People who dealt in money as a business, I've never really been around in that way. I was around people who ran people.

So, it was like many years later when I was an attorney briefly in New York and I had to work with people that thought flying the Concorde was chump change, and it sickened me in some ways to see a \$10,000 wine bill go past me and knowing I could have run the soup kitchen for six months on it. In fact, that's actually what drove me out of that business, and so those values have remained.

**SS: Who were the main people that you hung out with in ACT UP?**

**Like, who were your main people?**

KO: I didn't hang out with many people in ACT UP that often. I had — we're going to go into a different topic if you want to go down that road.

**SS: Go for it.**

KO: When I came in, I was controversial in demanding that I be treated as I said I should be treated. I was told there were arguments in a number of places about what I was and who I was. I remember being asked a couple times, and this is something Tim Linceford and I joked about just recently, is that he remembered the first time he

met me, he looked over and he goes, “You’re such a beautiful boy. Why would you want to do this?”

**SS: Oh, wow. Okay.**

KO: So, I was educating all the time. The anti-Trans Lesbian movement was still chugging right along, and part of it was I didn’t fit the DSM definition. So, anybody who knew any of that stuff knew that I was not classified as Trans according to the standard diagnosis, because you were supposed to be straight. That, back then, was still part of the definition, and that was part of what I was rebelling against. I was saying, “Screw you people. You know nothing.” And so, I said it in ACT UP to a lot of people, and I didn’t get invited to things.

And by the same token, I didn’t know how to act as me yet, so was so awkward and I felt so awkward that it sort of, I think, also held me back. There was some people I occasionally would see, like Natasha Gray and some other folks, and I could go. But the reality is, most of them were women. I mean, Alexis [Danzig], then Amy [now Jamie] Bauer, oh, gosh, and Monica [Pearl] and Heidi [Dorow], they were the people that I saw socially sometimes, and it was mostly younger women who, I think, felt more comfortable around me than anybody else. I think that a lot of gay men felt threatened. Certainly, the idea of anybody doing any sort of surgery on themselves made them queasy, something that gave me giggles occasionally. But it was something that I was so deeply trying to figure out, and other people were, too, with me. But people like Jay Blotcher and Michael Signorile and Theo [Smart] and other people were great, and then there were people that even today I still miss, Bob Rafsky, Spencer [Cox]. I never stop that. So, it’s a whole mix. And then I could go through — Eric Sawyer paid me to

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do a terrible job cleaning his apartment or his house, one of the people who supported me, and I was horrific at it. But, you know, it's those moments.

**SS: Is there any specific example of like a hostile or anti-Trans experience that you had in ACT UP that you want to share for posterity?**

KO: You know, nobody came at me. I do want to say that, and I want to be really clear, nobody was hostile openly per se. Nobody looked at me and said something like, "I don't want to be around you." But I did know that Gerri [Wells] had to invite me to the Women's Corner after beating people up about not wanting me in the Women's Corner at Monday nights. And so, you know, I was aware of the things in the background.

I wrote an article for *OutWeek*, and I was dating a woman out in New Jersey, friend of a friend, and so I wrote this article and I said, "Why would I let a useless couple inches of flesh get in the way with a really lovely relationship?" And, apparently, the next time that there were a bunch of people on a bus, like three days later going to somewhere, there was a screaming match on the bus, I was told, about that article, that a lot of the guys were really offended and a lot of the women are looking over going, "What's the problem here, kids? It isn't you."

**SS: It's so interesting, because, you know, the cliché is like it's Lesbians who reject Trans women, but actually you're saying it was the gay guys that were having the problems.**

KO: I think because I wasn't shy about the fact that I had lovers of both genders, and so right from the outset and particularly among the men — I don't think I'm talking out of school or my impression is wrong — that ACT UP was a really good

cruising spot. I'm not sure for women, but I know the guys really had a good time. I caught a couple of them in the office as I walked in on occasion.

So, I think there was a sense like this person — and this was, I should say, gay men. There may be the perception, I think, about some people that Lesbians were more hostile, but I never had that feeling. I felt like just generally in the community, gay men were more offended because there was this — first of all, there wasn't such a thing in a lot of ways as Trans men. There were very few of them around.

**SS: At that time.**

KO: So, Lesbians, I think, didn't have that sort of sense. Lesbians, it seemed always to me, to be that Janice Raymond, you know, Trans men or Trans people are men wanting to infect the feminist community, seventies bullshit still hanging around, whereas among gay men, we were seen as just self-loathing gay men who were so mentally ill over it, we would mutilate ourselves so we didn't have to be faggots. And that, I think, was more ingrained among more people. And in a time of crisis like we were all in, where particularly gay men felt assaulted, to have somebody like me standing there, looking at them, going, "I don't care. You need to respect my viewpoint too," I think that really ate at a lot more people, you know. And it's typical, a twenty-year-old has an easier time hearing something new and going, "Okay, I can listen," than a forty-five-year-old.

**SS: Right.**

KO: We get set in our ways. So it was that too. Among even the Lesbians, the divide was very much age-wise. One of the older Lesbians used to come, and she disappeared, I think, off the face of the Earth, but she'd be in her seventies now, a

woman, Sukie, and I don't remember her last name, and that was a nickname. But she was also homeless and would stay with me and would sit and tell me how much I wasn't a woman. And it just amused me to no end that somebody was taking my hospitality and not sleeping on the streets and would still tell me how wrong I was. And so, I just couldn't get angry.

**SS: Because it was so crazy.**

KO: It was so crazy in some ways.

**SS: Okay, so let's move on to the facilitation.**

KO: Sure.

**SS: Because that's what you're known for, and we have all this footage of you facilitating meetings and everyone remembers you as the facilitator of meetings.**

KO: And you say that, and right now I go, how goofy. Of all the things now, footage of me. I know meetings were always filmed. I thought I was more photogenic getting drug out by the police.

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**SS: How did you decide to run for facilitator?**

KO: Basically, because I was so shy as a kid — let me say this. When I was born, I was intersexed. I was nominalist gender, although nobody knew that, because in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 1966 they don't even show you to your mother if you're like that. It's one of my mother's real regrets, even now when I talk to her, that she never got to see her oldest child naked and understand what the kid looked like, because they were going to take care of the problem, and so all of the scar tissue and everything I had, I refer to that as the original mutilation. I did not know that, and so here

I thought I was just a Trans person. And I, so, growing up, I was two years old and my younger sister was born, and my mother told me when I was three I told her that in the bathtub that I looked wrong, I should look like Lauren. So that was there.

And as I got older, I came to understand how different I was, because I had a stutter and an extreme lisp. I had to do six years of speech therapy . I was extraordinarily shy. I would not engage with most other kids, and I was bullied. So, as I got older, I said, “I’m not going to be like this. I’m not going to be afraid of everybody.” And so, when I went off to college the first time, I said, “That’s it. I’m going to get involved.” And so, I became publicly involved, and so I always continuously challenged myself to do better. And I was terrified to facilitate, and that’s why I knew I should run.

Sorry for the overlong explanation, but it really was a way for me to sit and say, “You’re going to face this fear because you want to be able to do the next thing. The next time you need to be on the back of a flatbed addressing people, you don’t want to be tongue-tied.”

**SS: So, who was your co-facilitator at the time?**

KO: You know, I remember Walt[er Amstrong] – was it, David Robinson was always up there.

**SS: In a skirt.**

KO: Yes. And David I loved, you know, extraordinarily gentle person. And I don’t remember. I was always so blazingly scared. I was just trying to keep it together sometimes. In my head, I’m looking out and going, “All right, this is good. Just keep your focus.”

**SS: All right. Now I’m going to ask you for some concrete details.**

KO: Sure.

**SS: So, when you were facilitating a meeting, what were your exact responsibilities? Like, what did you have to do to prepare? Who set the agenda?**

KO: I never engaged in those things, to be honest with you, in terms of agenda and stuff, and I said to people, “I don’t know as much as you all.” And that really was it.

I should say the other thing I used to say to people, and this is also part of why I ran, is I wanted a Trans person up there. I wanted somebody to be able to say the things that needed to be said, as I could, and I didn’t feel there was obviously anybody else that could. And, you know, that was the thing. I wasn’t doing just ACT UP. I was over here on this side from ’89 onward, helping to create an entire new paradigm for Trans treatment with the people that eventually we set up the Gender Identity Project at the Center. Now that has morphed into Callen-Lorde [Community Health Center]. So, my time was entirely divided throughout that entire period, so my goals weren’t sort of controlling things. I felt that people in the community knew each other for many years, and I didn’t. So, I wanted to be there for visibility, to help. I felt that there needed to be somebody up there that could be the person that could look at somebody who was brand new, who had the bravery to stand up in a meeting and could genuinely look at them afterwards and say, “Thank you,” and walk over to them, and that’s what I really wanted to do. I wanted to be able to tell people that they needed to be there as much as I did.

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**SS: Okay. But I wanted to ask you about the nuts and bolts —**

KO: They were interim goals.

**SS: — the nuts and bolts of actually like you're in a room, there's five hundred hysterical people in the room. There's factions. There's conflicting agendas. Like, how did you make decisions about who to call on? How did you handle conflicts? Can you remember any specific conflicts that you were dealing with as a facilitator?**

KO: I cannot remember who was arguing on this night. I think I started to facilitate in '91, relatively early, and that was a period where we had so many demonstrations. Stop the Church had just happened, and that had been crazy. And coming into that, all of a sudden it felt like ACT UP was shot out of a cannon. People wanted to do things every night, and you'd get these proposals that somebody would pop up with, and it was something that wasn't that core still, we're dealing with AIDS. It was we're dealing with needle exchange or we're bringing this aspect into it. And you would see sometimes — this particular one I remember had to do with some of the small, three or four women on something, that wanted to get some money to do some small action, and then there were a few men who felt excluded from that.

And my feeling was that okay, people need to have that exchange and say what they need to say, but after that's done, it doesn't require the entire floor to sit and engage in this. The feeling was, if this isn't something that's happening this week, then why don't those people who are that concerned about it on both sides have a conversation and then come back to us. And that, to me, always felt like the most productive way. Here, we're out on the floor. Let's say the stuff that's difficult, and let's get it going, and everybody express, because the floor always felt like a safe space for that. You could stand up and say something that was really dangerously mentally ill, because we had

people there who were mentally ill. They were in the last stages of HIV. And the organization wasn't going to say to them, "You can't be here." That was always something I was proudest of ACT UP for in being there.

But by the same token, that didn't mean that everybody wanted to be engaged in this discussion, and so you would let it go for a little while, then you'd pull it back and say, "If this needs to go on, let's take it over here. Let's take to the side. If you need to have a decision tonight, take it aside and let's come back later in the meeting." And that really was it for me. I wanted that – the meetings were too long for everybody already, so let's keep it moving and let's get to the next issue.

**SS: Now, were you facilitating as the split was approaching?**

KO: No, no, I was not. That was subsequent. By the time the split happened, my ex, Alice [Tuohey], was already getting sick from just something totally unrelated. She got a virus and it got into her system really badly, and I became a caretaker for most of the decade. So, by the time the split came, I was really only going to demonstrations and I was really focusing on the Trans stuff, because there were lives that had to be saved in that arena.

**SS: Okay. So, let's talk about that, even though it's off topic for ACT UP.**

KO: Sure. Actually, it's not, and I'll tell you why when we get around to it.

**SS: Tell me why.**

KO: Well, no, because ACT UP was the safe space when we started the group. Subsequent groups starting in '89 and then in '90 when we were renting space initially from the Center and setting up the actual organization, that was part of it.

**SS: What was it called, the organization?**

KO: The Gender Identity Project. Rachel Pollack, Riki Wilchins, who's still a very active Trans writer. Rachel Pollack, who's the Tarot deck and other writings. Yvonne Ritter, who was the original Stonewaller, and Chris Anderson, who was the only Trans man who was really out at the time. So here we set this up at the Center, we put out stuff, and we started to get people that were coming in from suburban New Jersey and Long Island and had families and were suicidal and had never been anywhere where they could be comfortable as themselves. And for a lot of them, I used to say, "Come on in. Come on in dressed as you'd like, go by the name and gender you'd like, and come to me on a Monday meeting."

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And I would take them to Monday meetings, and I would ask occasionally, "Now, can you do this?" And it was like shepherding people. And that was a repeated thing I did when I wasn't facilitating and I wasn't needing to be super active. It was bring people along, because what they could see was that, as you said, I was a part of ACT UP, and so I would walk in, and hugs and kisses with people, and gay men would come up to me and Lesbians would come up to me and straight people would come up to me. Or I'd bump into Diamanda [Galas], and this famous person or this person, and I was being treated like a human being and called Kathy and welcomed. And they never felt that before. And so, for a lot of people, ACT UP was that first place where they could be safe saying, "My name is Summer. It's not Robert. It's Summer.

And here's how I'm dressed." And I may look like a guy in women's clothes, but it didn't matter. That was their moment of being able to be free. And it is no exaggeration to say that it was dozens of people that did that within ACT UP with me, and repeatedly, and they'd sometimes go to demonstrations and feel comfortable being dressed in their gender out in public at a demonstration or riding the subway.

ACT UP has had an enormous influence on the Trans community, something actually I presented at an event on Trans Day of Remembrance up here at University of Alaska, Fairbanks, a few weeks ago and discussed it. And the first time Trans people were in Gay Pride. The reason that, after we got some opposition from HOP [Heritage of Pride], they let us in was because basically I said to them, "You know who I am, right? Do you think I can't get twenty-five people to sit and get arrested in the street right before you try to have those people on motorcycles drive off?"

And they essentially said, "We don't need the aggravation."

**SS: Was that the contingent where the sign was "Time for Change" or**

—

KO: Yeah, "Transsexuals for Change." That was it.

**SS: Oh, okay. I remember that very well. Well, what about the issue about AIDS services for Trans people? When did it —**

KO: It was nonexistent.

**SS: It never came up, right?**

KO: It did after we started saying things.

**SS: In ACT UP?**

KO: Trans people – yes, but you couldn't specifically break us out at that time. If it was HIV services for somebody who was trans, well, you were dealing with somebody who was probably part of one of our populations already. They were homeless. They were youth. They were needle users. They were already in these at-risk groups, like so many Trans people are. So it wasn't that you couldn't engage with it. Excuse me, sorry. Let me say it this way. It was almost ancillary. It was almost that you weren't being rejected for services because you were trans; you were being rejected for services because of all these other reasons, or you didn't have healthcare because you couldn't get a job being a Trans person. Or you couldn't walk into somewhere and get services if you were dressed the wrong way. So, the answer there was "Don't walk in for services doing this. Right now, let's focus on this, on the HIV aspect, and we'll continue to work on this." But we knew there were two different things going on. There were long-term goals and short-term. First short-term goal was not get killed for being trans.

**SS: Right. So, these ideas that are now the way we understand, this was the preliminary introduction of starting to formulate and conceptualize more broadly.**

KO: Absolutely.

**SS: And then how did it move from ACT UP to the Center, to try to get the Center to do programs?**

KO: Actually, we were just renting space, running just a couple little groups, and Barbara Warren up in Mental Services, Health — I forget what her title was, but just began to engage with us a little bit, and all of sudden it became, "Well, what can we do?" and initially she shepherded it.

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Our initial funding came from a State of New York anti-drug abuse and suicide prevention money pool that we were able to get a little bit of it with her and set up the program. So, it wasn't sort of like we're going to do this at the Center. It was Riki lived four blocks away on West 11<sup>th</sup>, and so it was just sort of like there's the nearest room we can get, let's see if they'll rent to us at first, and that was good. Riki was involved already, or had been, at Identity House with them, so she was known and could go in there and do this, instead of this strange little weird person that nobody knew, me. And once that happened, it just sort of evolved. There was no sort of definitive "We're going to do this here." It was "This is the only resource we potentially have. Let's see." And it took off.

But for me, I was doing ACT UP and I'm doing this, and I'm teaching people in ACT UP that, "Hey, you can be fierce. You can defend yourself. You can feel that you are the person that is right." And so, we even, to the point where we started sitting and saying that "Okay, fine. Everybody else wants to tell us what their reality is, that their reality is the one that's, 'Oh, you know, you're not trans,' or, 'You're not this or you can't — .' And so, what we're going to do is we're going to define our reality as reality, and all those other people are non-transsexuals." And literally for a long time we just called people "nons" if they weren't in our group. And that's a really good position for mental health, and just to get that smile of saying, "Oh, right. I can be right for five minutes," because everybody else in your life is telling you you're wrong.

**SS: Now, I want to ask you a kind of conceptual question.**

KO: Sure.

**SS: Like, right now in this moment, 2017, there's this whole iconography around Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson, and everything is being sort of dated from them, but at the time that you and I are talking about, like 1992 or around then, were they a reference point at all in the work that you guys were doing?**

KO: Well, a personal reference, yes. For other people, they weren't known to most people who would have come in from New Jersey or — you know. It was completely unlikely. You have people who are very active now, like Melissa Sklarz, who was active in New York City politics, who calls me her Trans mommy. And so, I highly doubt she would have known coming in from Long Island.

But for me, you know, I was making forays into the bus terminal, I was going up to the Bronx, I was working with the kids at youth that were working the streets or hustling. What they would say was the “chick-with-dick hookers” that would get a \$10 BJ for some guy driving out, heading out to New Jersey after work. And so, Marsha Johnson and people that we lost from that community were certainly a touchstone for me and for other people that were really engaged in it, because we knew what the other side of it was. We knew.

A good example is when I say I was out, I was out. When I hung up my biker patches, it didn't mean I didn't keep riding, and I didn't keep riding out to the same places with the same people there and making it clear to them who I was, which nowadays people look at me and go, “Well, that was extraordinarily dangerous.” Well, guess what? The club I was in had thirty people. After I did that, one of them came out

as a gay man and another one came out as trans. So, to me, that visibility meant everything.

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And another friend in Jersey, she contacted me, she goes, “You know, I have this friend,” and they were seniors in high school. “I have this friend who’s going through this. Would you mind talking to him? He doesn’t know if he’s gay or whatever.” Well, this kid was seventeen years old, suicidal, the parents were worried, and was a Trans person through and through. And once I went out, talked to the parents, everything else, all of sudden, he wasn’t thinking of getting in the car and coming to New York City just to get away from it all and being a street hooker just so he could feel comfortable dressing as a woman, even if nobody else wanted him to. It was, oh, my god, the parents now have an understanding of why. And within a year, she had transitioned. Within a year, her parents were utterly supportive, and for people in their forties back then, that was like the dream result. They wished they had transitioned as teenagers or whatever and were able to not have twenty years of pain.

So, there was that thing where I could look at it and go, “Wait a second. You have somebody who’s going to be extremely at risk if you don’t have the early intervention.” And my head was always in that place, and it was an ACT UP place. It was why I was on needle exchange. It was an intervention before the harm happened.

**SS: Now, what was your role in the needle exchange campaign?**

KO: I showed up when they needed people to get arrested. That was it. I wasn’t out on the campaign prior to that. I was aware of it. I did a little bit of support and some fliers and stuff right at that very end. But I showed up on the day deliberately.

I was part of the team that was going in there for the arrest and the trial and went through the whole process.

**SS: Okay. So, let's just say for the record that you were one of the defendants in the case that won needle exchange for New York.**

KO: Yes, I was a defendant there. I was a defendant in Stop the Church. I was a defendant in D.C. I liked being a defendant.

**SS: Have you ever been found guilty?**

KO: Yeah, certainly. Stop the Church and a few other things. Also, in D.C., we were found guilty. When we went down, a bunch of us just rented a van one night and went down and protested at the Souter hearings, and Joe Biden cracked jokes about me, and there's a great AP wire photo of a very tired, bored-looking cop pulling me down off a chair. My mother was very proud of that.

**SS: What did Joe Biden say about you?**

KO: Oh, no, afterwards he looked up. What happened was I was one of the first ones arrested, but at that point they were still just pushing us out the door, which was always a dumb thing with me. I mean, the same thing got Ira [Manhoff] and I in trouble with [Roger] Ailes. Push us out the door, we're just going to go straight back in. And I went straight back in and stood up on a chair, and so I was one of the first and one of the last out. And as soon as I was finally pulled out and wasn't shouting anymore, apparently Biden looked up and said, "Welcome to D.C., Judge Souter." I'm proud of the fact that Dennis DeConcini got interrupted by me multiple times.

**SS: Oh, good. So, when you decided to get arrested with — how many other codefendants were there in the needle exchange case?**

KO: I think there was eight of us in total. There was Rich Elovich, Jon [Parker], Gregg Bordowitz, Rod Sorge. [also, Cynthia Cochrane, Debra Levine, Monica Pearl and Dan Keith Williams]

**SS: Jon who?**

KO: I'm trying to remember his last name. He was not in ACT UP. He was the needle exchange guy.

**SS: Jon Parker?**

KO: Parker, there we go. Yes, I just heard the *P*. And Rod Sorge. Jeez, I know I'm forgetting a couple more, but that's what off the top of my head I just remember.

**SS: Did you think you were going to win?**

KO: No, no. I never went into a trial expecting to win. And, in fact, for that one, after Stop the Church and the community service that I hadn't done, I thought I was likely facing six to nine months, year, under the misdemeanor statutes, probably. But then again, I thought the same thing when we went on trial with Stop the Church all the way through. And I remember a conversation with Ann Northrop where I said, looked at her, I remember saying before we even went on trial and all, saying, "Do you want to go to jail? You have neighbors. You're going to have to face them afterwards." Because I very seriously thought that that was going to be the case at some point, that I was going to face a long-term lockup, and I didn't know. That was very scary to me. I didn't know what with my physics, my physical body and who I was, how I'd be treated. I figured that there was going to be a very tough time. But you roll with it.

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**SS: Did you testify at the trial? Did you make a statement?**

KO: Yeah, I was on the stand at both trials, yes.

**SS: Do you remember what you said at the needle exchange trial?**

KO: If I recall, most of what I talked about was running the soup kitchen and seeing people who were needle users and exactly what happened to them with AIDS and seeing what it meant for their families and just, you know, that it was really aimed towards why we needed to be doing what we were doing. I mean, in a lot of ways, that's what we were all trying to impress, was this has to happen. It's not an option anymore. Any right-thinking person would know you don't condemn people to death just because they have a drug addiction. That's not what we do. It is not an executable offense, and that's what effectively it had become.

**SS: Who was the judge, do you remember?**

KO: Oh, goodness. Oh, god, I can't think. I remember Judge Fernandez from Stop the Church so well. She nearly threw me in jail. I just can't remember her name. It took so long for that ruling to come down, and right now, yeah, it doesn't —  
[Judge Laura E. Drager]

**SS: Who was your lawyer?**

KO: For that?

**SS: Mm-hmm.**

KO: That was Jill Stein and —

**SS: Not Jill Stein.**

KO: Not Jill Stein. Jill Harris.

**SS: Jill Harris. Okay.**

KO: Jill Harris and Mike — oh, god, he was —

**SS: Spiegel. Mike Spiegel.**

KO: Spiegel, there we go. He was old SDS. I remember talking to him about the sixties, because I think he had met Berrigan, too, back then.

**SS: Now back to the Stop the Church case. So, what were you charged with? So, you had disrupted Mass at Stop the Church.**

KO: Yes, I was one of the people who laid in the aisle.

**SS: And what was the charge?**

KO: Well, the one I think we were convicted of was disrupting a church service, a classic First Amendment violation, separate law for church. But there was the usual resisting arrest and discon [disorderly conduct] and everything else, but I think the conviction was only for the church violations.

**SS: And you were sentenced to community service that you never did?**

KO: I maintained that I was already doing community service and they could stick it up their — and, in fact, actually, that’s what I argued. I said, “Lori, I’m not —.” She thought that was very amusing.

**SS: Lori Cohen.**

KO: Yeah.

**SS: So, what made you leave ACT UP ultimately?**

KO: Well, I had to move out of New York City initially, just because eventually by ’93, the photography studio that my friend owned, that I lived in for a while, that I then started working for and then took over half ownership, the recession hit and it just killed us. We just were too small and we got killed and couldn’t pay New York rent, and that was that on the business. I was out of work, basically. So, first Alice

and I moved out to Pennsylvania, out to Easton, and to save costs and I was commuting in to try and keep the business open, and when that failed, I actually went and learned to drive tractor-trailer.

**SS: Oh, wow.**

KO: And I put a “Silence = Death” license plate on the front of my truck with a big pink triangle up there, and I drove the country, and I was known in some circles for my green flak jacket and my bad attitude. And then I went and did tractor-trailer repossession and would sneak into people’s yards and steal their trucks, \$200,000 Freightliner. So, I left New York to go be a badass elsewhere, I suppose, as somebody said, but never felt that way.

**SS: So, I only have one more question left. Is there anything we haven’t covered that you think is important?**

01:05:00

KO: Oh, boy. Well, let me just say it this way. ACT UP — there’s periods in my life where I’m very proud of what I could do, very thankful for. I’m very proud of what I did in ACT UP, but I’m more thankful. ACT UP saved my life, pure and simple. And it saved countless lives, obviously.

But moving forward in my life, ACT UP was one of the places where I got concussions. Somewhere there’s a film of me facedown in a puddle being kicked by cops. Somewhere there’s another film of me getting beaten up by a bystander. But I was out. During that period in late ’89, I got attacked with a baseball bat and my skull broken in multiple places in the South Bronx, and I came through that with all these concussions, and I had concussions from when I was younger, and so as I moved forward here into this last decade, I started to get dementia, and I’m right now four years into a five-year

lifespan likely for frontotemporal dementia. And so, getting desperate about that, that's sort of — I think of Mark Harrington's speech before — I think it was FDA, the church, where he talked about, "We have to be the experts. We have to take control of our health."

And I started doing research, and my neurologist in Seattle, before we moved up here, wanted to write it up, because I reversed it, and he said, "There's nobody else in the literature." But what did I do? I sat down, I started reading scientific studies from different disciplines, I started linking things together, and I can do this. If you'd talked to me four years ago, you would have had a very confused, muddled person who didn't remember most of this. I'd forget what I was doing going to the grocery store. And so, ACT UP saved my life in the late eighties and the early nineties, but twenty years later, ACT UP saved my life.

**SS: Right. Because we tried to get in touch with you for like fifteen years to do this interview.**

KO: And I didn't know anybody wanted — I'm so — social media, all this stuff. You look at where I live. I like being outside. I'm not a computer person in a lot of ways. And in Seattle I went back to work and I ran a printing company, and I like working with my hands. I don't like sitting behind a desk. So, I didn't understand people were looking for me. And when I popped online again, and all of a sudden there was you, and there were you and other people, it was surprising, and I was gratified. But it's certainly been funny to think about that, because ACT UP is something.

When my wife, my current wife, Adrienne [Helinski], and I got together and I started talking about it, she was — she's seven years younger than me. She was in

college seeing some of this stuff and wondering, “Who are these crazy people? What is this?” I mean, she’s from Tulsa, Oklahoma, and all of a sudden, here she’s with one of these crazy people. As she’s talked to people over the years, she’ll say something to somebody, and they’ll go, “Oh, I was living in L.A. I was in ACT UP or went to a couple of things.” So, it’s now this little strange thing that sits in the background.

But I adore my time in ACT UP. It’s one of those things that when I want to enumerate to somebody who I am, I will refer to myself as an old leftist, crazy activist who has no fear of getting arrested. I had a meeting with the Chief of Police here in Fairbanks two days ago. We’ve got a growing progressive movement up here, and there are people who have talked about getting arrested who have never thought about it before, and I wanted to talk to him and see what the police response was and what that would be. And being part of ACT UP and having come through this and being able to look at him and say, “You know, I was part of a group that worked for public safety, not only among us. We wanted to have a professional relationship with the police. We wanted our people not to get injured. We wanted the police not to get injured. We wanted people to walk away from this feeling like they were respected and we were respected.” And being able to honestly say that to him makes a difference, you know, say to him, “If you want to go and look at some of this history, you’ll see what we did. It looked chaotic, but everybody went home that night and it was okay. Nobody wound up in hospitals because somebody assaulted a cop. Cop winds up in a hospital because people pulled them down off of horses, those kind of things. We never rioted.”

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And I said on the floor of ACT UP sometime in like ’90 or ’91 — I got shouted down for it, because some people didn’t understand my point, but having grown

up with the idea that, okay, there's something weird with the IRA, and my father and stuff and being aware of that more and more as I got older, I knew what terrorism looked like, and it always amazed me that the ACT UP communities here, in San Fran, elsewhere, nobody was turning cars over and setting them on fire. And I said that on the floor. I said, "Any other community would have done this long ago, and here's what we're doing. We should be proud of it. We should be proud that this is not what we're doing. We're not creating a terrorist movement." It's not like where you had the SDS and the Weathermen evolved out of that. It's not like where you have an environmental movement and then you have ELF [Earth Liberation Front] evolve. We stayed true to nonviolence. We're perhaps one of the few social movements, maybe the only one in the U.S., to never have evolved a wing that went off on that.

**SS: Right, even though people were dying, yeah.**

KO: Yeah. And I would sit and say, "We were as desperate as any other community that did that." And I have never heard people really say that, but I think it's something that the organization and, quite frankly, the entire freakin' gay, Lesbian, trans, bi, Q, I community should be very freakin' proud of. We've been attacked for centuries, and our fighting back has been to go out and do Church Ladies. Our fighting back has been to take them to task in the media and make them look silly and continuously confront the other stupidity that flies at us. But to confront it without the need for violence, that is a rare thing anywhere.

**SS: Well said. So, here's my final question.**

**JIM HUBBARD: Wait. Before you do that, I have a question.**

**SS: Go ahead. Jim has a question for you.**

KO: Sure.

**JH: Hi. When I show *United in Anger*, I'm often asked why there isn't anything in the film about Trans people. And so, my answer, which I'm not entirely satisfied with, is, first, that there isn't the footage to have included that, but also that the conversation was very different back then and that those issues just were not part of the conversation the way they are now. But I wonder if you have a different answer or more of an answer or something to say about that.**

KO: Well, I think the lack of footage, obviously, because we weren't raising it on the floor in the same way. But I do think the idea that the practice of Trans people being in ACT UP, like I was saying, people coming with me, people would sometimes come and go, too, when we had the little teach-ins sometimes, and I'd be — they would oftentimes — they'd be in that main room, if that was available on a night or whatever, Wednesdays or something, and then we'd have our group. Always our little group rented the room back in the corner away from the main room, where we oftentimes had people go off in affinity groups on Monday nights. And so, when we finished that, we would come out and there would be ACT UP people doing learning things, and that was another place where people would greet me and I'd get to introduce somebody.

And ACT UP's place for the Trans movement wasn't speaking about the Trans movement, because that wasn't, as you say, part of the public conversation then.

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What it really was, was to be, for us, a place where we were safe, we knew people respected us, and people could for the first time in their lives just feel like themselves, that they could just sit and go, "Okay, I don't have to think about this. I can open my mouth, and somebody's going to listen to what I say. They're not going to look at

whether or not I'm wearing a wig and makeup." And so, the effect for people there, it didn't have to be words; it just had to be human kindness in the way that we all hope we would get and give.

ACT UP, it gets — Ed Koch called it fascist, everything else. The kind of things that have been said about ACT UP, and what I don't think is said enough and gets understood enough is that perhaps at its time was the most humane organization in New York City. At the time, it was the one place where anybody could walk into. Was there any constituent of any group that could walk into ACT UP? I swear, if somebody had come in and wearing a Klan outfit and said, "I'm gay and I don't know what to do about it," we would have just said, "Why don't you just take off the robes first and we'll talk."

I really have that sense of it, that there was that feeling that okay, we'll get through this, because every other group that came in and argued got listened to, got heard. It might have taken a while. It might have taken two years for a lot of the women's issues to come to the fore and to be felt like that is a part of us, or that we should be fighting for healthcare universally, or we should be standing up not just for treatment access and stuff, the immediate things, but can we get housing for people that have HIV and are homeless and they need to refrigerate their meds? Can we force the city to follow the law?

And so, within ACT UP, the Trans community, we were one small group that could just come in and not have to be Trans all the time. We could just be people, like everybody else in the room. And for somebody to feel normal in their skins for the first time in their lives, and they're forty-five years old, that to people is — you could

have given — Oprah could have given them a car, and it wouldn't have been special in the same way.

**SS: Okay. So, let me ask you my final question.**

KO: Sure.

**SS: So, looking back —**

KO: Did that help you, by the way?

**JH: Yeah, that's very helpful. In fact, I'm going to have to try to figure out how to get that whole thing onto the web.**

KO: Edit away.

**SS: So, my final question is, looking back, what would you say was ACT UP's greatest achievement and what do you think was its biggest disappointment?**

KO: The word "disappointment," first of all, doesn't come into my head. So right there, it doesn't. There's nothing about ACT UP that I'm specifically disappointed about. I know other people are in certain ways. But having come in from another left-wing viewpoint or organization, organizations, they work for a year or two and they break up. So, the fact that all of a sudden ACT UP could morph and change and add new ideas and think differently, and the people in it could grow, when I sit back and look back, what do I think ACT UP's greatest achievement was, was showing the rest of the freakin' gay and Lesbian community we didn't have to be screaming at each other all the time.

Prior to, when I first started engaging in the gay community in the late seventies, in '79, when I was thirteen, I'd get on a train and I'd go down to Chicago with

01:20:00

my boyfriend, and we would go in and out of gay bars. The drinking age was eighteen. He looked older, I looked like a child, but didn't matter. And that community was not mine, I did not feel comfortable there, because I, inside, knew that I was not a part of that. And five years of ACT UP, '87 to '93, six years of ACT UP, I knew what I was a part of, and I think that happened for a lot of people. I think a lot of people all of a sudden came out of ACT UP and said, "You know what? I should be respected. I should be respected for who I am. I should feel safe in my skin. I shouldn't feel like when I go to a doctor and I have to start new with somebody, and I'm HIV-positive, that I have to sit there and be ashamed of that, that I did something wrong, that I'm to blame." And that shot through communities, and I think ACT UP did that in a way that no other group before or since has. I know of no other place that's universally supportive like ACT UP New York was. And that's its enduring legacy, and I think that's why when your film and was it *How to Survive a Plague* — is that right?

**SS: That other film.**

KO: Well, whatever. But when you go and look at them, you can see that evolution of the idea. You can see the change in focus over time, that expansion outward, and how people had self-respect, that the rest of the world didn't respect, and we can show that to people now and we can sit and say, "Guess what? We can still do this. All these communities can work together and find their points, and if we need to argue about other things, we will. But let's first come at it from a point of respect for each other."

**SS: Beautiful way to end.**

KO: We never did it.

**SS: Thank you, Kathy.**

KO: Thank you. I'm really proud to be asked.

**SS: That was fantastic. Thanks so much. Take care.**

KO: Talk to you later.

**JH: Okay.**

KO: How you doing?

**JH: I'm doing well. That was really great.**

**SS: It was excellent. Thank you.**

**JH: Yeah, that was great. So, yeah, I have to do all this work and we'll get it transcribed and get it up on the web and everything.**

KO: When are you guys recutting the film because of *Rise and Resist*? Considering that ACT UP is now running that whole thing too.

**JH: No, I'm done. It's someone else's. Someone else has to make that film. So, yeah, if you need anything else for that screening —**

KO: Yeah, and I was talking to the woman this morning that we're setting it up, so we're probably going to use that digital file, the high-quality file you mentioned. So, I will shoot you something when I've got an idea of how we're going to do it, and you can tell me how to obtain it or whatever we need to do.

**JH: Okay, great.**

KO: Yeah. But, yeah, that's moving forward. That was somebody I was meeting with this morning about that and the Chief of Police stuff and everything else. So, yeah, that's going to be exciting.

**JH: Okay, great. Well, thanks a lot.**

KO: Talk to you later.

**JH: Okay, right. Take care.**

KO: Bye, Sarah.

**SS: Bye-bye.**

KO: Bye.