

**Interview with Kate Stanley**

**Interviewed by Associate Dean Ann M. Pflaum  
University of Minnesota**

**Interviewed on July 28, 1999**

Kate Stanley - KS  
Ann Pflaum - AP

AP: This is Ann Pflaum. It is July 28, 1999. I'm interviewing Kate Stanley who entered the university about 1977 and was editor around 1980 as editor of the *Daily*. She had had experience in Appalachia, worked in New York, and had spent her freshman year at Macalester.

Kate, you chose the [University of Minnesota] campus because you wanted the job as a copywriter and, then, you became an English major?

KS: I was a proofreader.

AP: Sorry.

KS: I was an English major.

AP: Do you remember some of the teachers that you had?

KS: Of course, all of my fondest memories have to do with teachers in the Journalism School because I took many classes in the Journalism School. I do also have fond memories of certain teachers in the English Department. First and foremost, of course, would be Tom Clayton.

AP: Who has just been named a Regents professor, if I'm not mistaken?

KS: Yes, he was. He is one of the world's most gifted teachers of Shakespeare and instilled in my small soul a love for Shakespeare. I have tremendous fondness for Tom Clayton, as well as for Peter Reed, who was just a lovely teacher. I remember studying poetry... What was his name? [William] Rosendahl. He was a great old southerner, who I remember taught me [William] Blake and I used to delight in hearing him say, "Little lamb, who made thee? God in heaven made thee. Dost thou know who made thee?" It was great.

AP: With a southern accent?

KS: Yes. He was great. That's the English Department. Of course, John Lawrence "Larry" Mitchell, who is now long gone to Austin, Texas, was an absolutely wonderful teacher as well. He taught me linguistics. But, most of my fond memories have to do with professors in the Journalism Department, many of whom became my dear friends.

AP: Could you describe some of those people?

KS: Of course, first is George Hage who I certainly studied with in the classroom. I believe he gave me an incomplete in critical writing. I learned a tremendous amount from him. He was a most compelling individual and a dear friend to all students. I actually knew George as a high school student because I was on the same debate foursome with his son, Dave Hage, one of my high school classmates. One little peculiarity is that Dave Hage is now my colleague on the editorial page here.

AP: What did the Senior Hage teach? Other people mentioned him, but I haven't had a chance to delve into what he taught.

KS: He was an exquisite teacher of writing

AP: This is journalistic writing.

KS: Yes, but also critical writing.

AP: People reading this book, including myself while I'm writing it, don't know very much about... Can you explain the different kinds of writing if you were an English major or a journalism student?

KS: In truth, it's the journalism school that teaches people how to write. I'm sorry to say that the English Department doesn't know how to teach writing particularly.

AP: How do they do this?

KS: You're asking me a deeply psychological question. I think how people like George Hage taught writing was to maintain high standards and to have a very low tolerance for blather and baloney. They start out teaching students to absorb facts, organize them, and deliver them. I think that's probably the first step in the teaching of writing. The truly gifted writing teachers end up giving their students an ear for melody and ability to savor words and combinations of words and really teach their students that words can change the world and that they deserve reverence. That's the sort of thing that George was able to do.

Of course, George was a protégé of Mitch Charnley, who was a teacher when George first came to the university. When I was editor of the *Daily*, Mitch was in his early nineties, and even though he'd been retired from the university for a long time, he was omnipresent and always at the disposal of editors at the *Daily*.

*Inquirer*, which was to be published as the finals' week edition at the end of spring quarter. It was published on June 4. It featured a mock interview with Jesus Christ under a headline proclaiming, "Christ Speaks," and it included some, obviously, fake photographs of Christ dragging a cross around the Northrop Mall and an interview, which was exceedingly irreverent. Other sections of the parody mocked *Play Boy* and the *Minneapolis Star* and a born again Christian student tabloid that was popular on campus then called the *Today's Student*. We had a page instead that was headlined "Today's Stupids." The articles were full of sexual references and roundly ridiculed all sorts of racial, ethnic, and religious groups. It was, I think, quite funny to a number of students and it was, appropriately, sophomore humor.

The same week that the humor issue was published, the Board of Regents passed a resolution deploring it and a group quickly developed on campus demanding that all university ties with the *Daily* be severed. At that time, about 14 percent of the newspaper's \$1.4 million budget was derived from a mandatory student services fee that was issued quarterly. The mandatory fee was about \$1.75 per student. The rest of the *Daily's* budget was covered by advertising.

AP: At issue became the student fees. Then, did the Student Fees Committee move to take the fees away? What was the sequence there?

KS: It actually was a long process. Immediately after the publication of this issue, a group arose to protest the publication of this thing. Their demand was extravagant. They wanted all university ties with the *Daily* to be severed. They wanted the *Daily* to be kicked out of Murphy Hall, to be tossed off campus. They thought there should be no connection at all between the university and this newspaper. They might have preferred that it be shut down. So that was the kind of extreme demand that was [unclear].

AP: Who was behind this demand? Was it a student group? Do you know?

KS: Well, there were letters to the metropolitan newspapers. There were letters to the university administration. There was a flood of protest to the Minnesota Legislature. I would say that many people with deeply held religious beliefs in Minnesota felt strongly about this and a number of legislators, who felt prodded by such constituents, felt strongly about it.

Within a matter of three or four months, the governor issued a condemnation of this issue of the *Daily* and said that there ought to be some examination of the relationship between the *Daily* and the university.

AP: Do you remember which governor that was?

KS: It was Al Quie. It just became very, very clear that a lot of people were upset.

As I said, June 13 was my first day of work and that morning, I got up and took a shower and got dressed for my first day as editor. I got a phone call at home at about 8:00 or 8:30 in the morning and it was Jeff Brown from the *Minneapolis Star* and he said that he wanted to know my perspective

on the humor issue, that he'd been getting a lot of calls. This is obviously a big brouhaha. Did I think the humor edition was funny? Would the *Daily* apologize? Would I have gone ahead with it if I'd been in charge? Those are the kinds of questions he was asking. I remember eating my Wheat Chex and thinking, this is going to be a very different job than I anticipated. [laughter] I remember, at that time, being quite frightened at thinking about my responsibility and desire to stand behind the *Daily* and even the people who had been involved in the humor edition, not just to sell them out by saying, "I didn't have anything to do with this." But, at the time, I felt the need to tell the truth and my sense of the humor edition was that if I'd been in charge, I would not have approved the content.

Very quickly, I believe that same day, June 13, we had a staff meeting and talked about the fact that the phone had been ringing off the hook and that we'd insulted a lot of people. After about two hours of discussion, we voted to print an editorial expressing our belief that humor has a place in a student newspaper but acknowledging as well that, in this case, perhaps, we'd failed and apologizing to people we had offended.

Three days after the apology appeared in print, the chairman of the Senate Education Committee, a guy named "Jerry" Jerome Hughes, H-u-g-h-e-s, who was a DFLer from Maplewood announced a plan to hold a legislative hearing to examine the *Daily's* relationship with the "U" and that was held. I can't tell you the precise date, but it was held, I think, late in the summer of 1979. It was a remarkable occasion. There were about 300 people there. There were representatives of twenty-two organizations crowded into the hearing room to air their feelings. They included the Minnesota chapter of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, the Minnesota Council of Churches, and the group of students who were upset, who called themselves the Ad Hoc Anti-Defamation Committee. I remember the woman who was kind of the leader of the Ad Hoc Anti-Defamation Committee. Her name was Kathy Sackett, S-a-c-k-e-t-t, Kathleen, I think. This was billed as an informational meeting and President C. Peter Magrath showed up and so did the chairwoman of the Regents, Wenda Moore, M-o-o-r-e. They spoke about the *Daily's* limited financial and organizational ties to the university and said, basically, "Don't worry about this. The university will do its own housekeeping. We'll handle it fine."

On the basis of the information gathered at that hearing, there were a couple of legislators who warned that if the Board of Regents didn't sever all university ties with the *Daily*, they'd introduced legislation to that effect. After that, Governor Al Quie stated that he favored eliminating the mandatory student publications fee so that the *Daily* would be entirely financially independent. There were a lot of political pressures building and, ultimately, the Minnesota House of Representatives held another hearing that was very similar to the one I've just described to you.

AP: So the first one was Senate and the next one was House?

KS: Yes. They were both committee hearings, the Senate Education Committee and the House Education Committee.

AP: Right. This is, again, fall of 1979?

KS: Yes, summer and fall of 1979—actually, the House Education Committee hearing was in November.

My recollection is that the people who were upset with the *Daily* were very eager for the Regents to do something. So, the Regents ended up holding their own inquiry. My recollection is that that was in the winter of 1979-1980. The Regents had received recommendations from many legislators that students be allowed to withdraw fee support from the *Daily*, either that it be eliminated altogether or that students have the option of deciding whether they wanted to support the *Daily*. Of course, the reason for that was people were offended so they didn't want to have to underwrite content that they found objectionable. There was a series of hearings at the university by the Board of Regents where they asked me lots of questions about how the *Daily* operated and I offered my arguments that the *Daily* is a public good, it serves all students, that simply the information available in the *Daily* calendar was worth more than the price that students pay through the student fee, that the *Daily* is one common forum for all students, and that it would serve neither the university nor its educational mission nor the *Daily* and its young journalists if there were to be no more relationship between the university and the *Daily*.

Ultimately, what happened is that the Board of Regents received a recommendation from President Magrath and he proposed in April 1980 that the *Daily* fee be made refundable and his proposal prompted the Twin Cities Campus Assembly, which is the democratic organization of both students and faculty, to endorse by a 99-7 margin the resolution urging the Regents to disregard the president's recommendation. But, a month later, in May 1980, the Board of Regents voted 8-3 to adopt a resolution derived from Magrath's proposal.

AP: So, May 1980, they supported the Magrath proposal?

KS: Yes. In doing so, the board disregarded a lot of things. They disregarded the recommendation from their own faculty leaders who voted overwhelmingly to maintain the mandatory *Daily* fee. They disregarded the recommendation of student leaders of the Student Fees Committee and of the Board of Regents' own Student Concerns Committee, all of whom felt that the *Daily* fee should be retained. One thing that happened that's of interest is that the Regents' action sparked a lot of talk of a no-confidence vote against Magrath by some faculty leaders, but, apparently, they ultimately decided not to do that.

After this vote in May, the *Daily* staff got together and tried to talk about what to do. In truth, this move was not particularly financially damaging to us. It had to do with only 14 percent of our funding and the likelihood was that a minority, probably a small minority, of students would opt not to pay the fee. Most, probably, would continue to pay it. So, this wasn't a real financial concern for us but we all felt that it had profound implications for freedom of the press for student newspapers, that this definitely was a punitive response to content and that, therefore, it did constitute a violation of the First Amendment, which guarantees freedom of the press.

So, we consulted our lawyer, who for many years had been Marshall Tanick, T-a-n-i-c-k. He was an alum of the university and of the *Daily*. He wrote sports for the *Daily* and went on and got his law degree from Stanford.

AP: Can you stop a minute? When I was taking notes, I missed a phrase... that it was a punitive response based on content and...

KS: It was a punitive response to content.

AP: It violated which...?

KS: And was, therefore a violation of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

AP: Oh, yes. That's what I wanted to know. You engaged Marshall Tanick.

KS: We talked to Marshall. Every newspaper needs a lawyer and Marshall had been the *Daily's* lawyer for a long time. We, ultimately, decided to challenge the decision of the Board of Regents in court. We filed the lawsuit in federal court. The citation is *Stanley vs. Magrath*, but it was the editors of the *Daily* and the *Daily* itself suing the university president and the Board of Regents. Our claim was that the Regents' action was a punitive response to content.

AP: Are we into 1981 yet?

KS: It took awhile to prepare the lawsuit. I know that we filed it in the fall of 1980.

AP: Now, you're no longer editor?

KS: Right. I stopped being editor in June 1980.

AP: So, what are you doing? Are you still in school? Are you out of school?

KS: I was hired away from the university by the *Minneapolis Star*. I spent my summer as an intern for the *Star* editorial page and, at the end of the summer, they hired me full time.

We filed our lawsuit in the fall of 1980 claiming that the university had infringed on the newspapers' First Amendment rights.

AP: How were you going to pay for the lawsuit? Did you have friends of the *Daily* that helped? Or was that not an issue?

KS: Well, basically, Marshall Tanick was taking the case pro bono... Marshall Tanick and his partner, Sam Heins, H-e-i-n-s, who also was a *Daily* alum. The two of them charged us fees that were ridiculously low and that we could afford. I recall something like forty bucks an hour. This was, basically, a labor of love and the *Daily* inspires that in its alumni. They are moved to give back to the

institution that gave them their start. So, that's what Marshall and Sam were doing. They were personally outraged at what the university had done, as was the entire faculty of the Journalism School. There was just a very strong feeling that this was a matter of principle and that this move by the Regents needed to be challenged.

So, we filed the suit in federal court. It took three years to reach trial stage. I can't tell you precisely when the trial was heard, but it was a more than weeklong trial heard by Judge Robert Renner and we lost. We were quite shattered. So, we decided to appeal and we appealed to the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. In 1983, we had a hearing before the appellate court.

AP: That's pretty close because the trial was 1983. That was pretty fast service.

KS: If I were you, I wouldn't trust me on these dates.

AP: All right.

KS: But, it wasn't long. I don't think it was more than six months. Marshall can give you precise dates.

AP: Okay.

KS: The appeal was heard before a three-judge panel and sometime after the hearing, I got a call from Sam Heins: the appellate court ruled, in a 3-0 decision, that the university had, indeed, acted unconstitutionally and ordered the administration to pay us all lost student fees and pay our attorney costs at regular rates as well. Marshall had an ingenious suggestion: part of the recovered money was put into a First Amendment Fund, which has survived ever since, to underwrite special programs to enlighten the university community about the indispensability of free expression and of the First Amendment. That's, basically, the history of *Stanley vs. Magrath*. You can now look it up on the web. It has found its way into Don Gilmore's mass communication law textbook published by West Publishing. It is cited as a precedent around the country that established the rights of student newspapers to publish free from government intervention.

AP: That certainly is a phenomenal outcome. Could I ask you to back up a little bit?

KS: Sure.

AP: One of the things we have read and found as we look at the history of the university is that the *Daily* is just a gigantic institution. When we start this history, it is regarded as the student newspaper with the largest circulation in the country. Did it still have that claim to fame when you were editor?

KS: Oh, yes, no question. It was revered nation-wide. The *Daily* quite often receives the top awards from the National Collegiate Press Association and the Society of Professional Journalists and all sorts of journalistic organizations. It very often receives the award for the top student newspaper in the country. I often consider when it doesn't, it's because it's just not fair for the same newspaper to get it again and again. [laughter] It's one of the larger dailies in the state. It's probably the fourth

or fifth largest daily in the state of Minnesota. It has become, by virtue of momentum and by virtue of wise guidance from ingenious journalism professors, a true newspaper.

The students who run the *Daily* really run it from top to bottom. I was, as editor of the *Daily*, in charge of a budget of more than a million dollars. I was overseeing a staff of scores of reporters. I was making real hiring and firing decisions every day. The content of the newspaper was solely my responsibility to be exercised as I thought best, delegated to my editors. Having that kind of responsibility is a real character building experience. If you look at the *Daily* over time, what you see is a phenomenal journalistic product put out on the streets every day by nineteen and twenty and twenty-one year olds. How are they able to do it? They do it because they must and because they're expected to do it and because no one has told them they can't. The *Daily* has developed wonderful quality control systems over the years and has a history that no one dares betray. That's why it's the wonderful institution that it is.

AP: Is there an example that you could give so that the humor issue, which probably is not the highest moment of the journalistic product... Are there other stories that it's well known for, a series or treatments of topics that are considered exemplary?

KS: You could find examples of that every single year. You could go down into the basement of the *Daily*—actually, it's not in the basement anymore; I often forget that it has moved out of Murphy Hall and it's over there on University Avenue—library, which I'm sure is quite glitzy now, and pull the bound volumes off the shelves and look through day-after-day of newspapers and find many, many, many enterprising stories. The *Daily* has a long history of exposing wrongdoing at the university, of highlighting tremendous successes and bringing them to the fore, of challenging the administration in its times of folly, of promoting innovations that have enhanced the university's reputation. It is journalism at its very best. It probably has to do with the fact that these are students. They're voracious and they're ferocious and they haven't been tamed by the conventions of the work-a-day world. It was really common for somebody who was working on a special project to show up at 8:00 in the morning and stay until midnight making phone calls, conducting research, writing, and revising, conferring with writing partners and editors. The demands that *Daily* reporters and editors made on themselves far out-pace anything that would be expected down here at the *Star Tribune*. There was a tremendous pride of authorship and a wonderful exhilarating feeling of ownership at the *Daily*.

AP: And this continues?

KS: My sense is that it continues. A year doesn't go by that I don't speak to some editor or writer at the *Daily* and have some kind of contact. I continue to look at the newspaper. I often think that its coverage of issues and its writing is the best in the state. It's a terrific newspaper. This isn't playing house. This isn't playing at journalism. This is the real stuff. What I tell high schoolers who want to become journalists and even college graduates who want to become journalists and have an English degree, is if you want to be a journalist, there's one place you can learn it: the *Minnesota Daily*. They take naive nineteen-year olds and turn them into seasoned reporters within a few years time. Anyone coming out of the *Daily*, after two or three years, is ready to be hired pretty much by any newspaper in the country. It's been nineteen years, more than nineteen years, since I walked out of the *Daily*.

newsroom and I continue to believe that. It's established something by looking at our own newsroom...

[End of Tape 1, Side 1]

[Tape 1, Side 2]

KS: I must say that the *Daily* newsroom in which I worked had very little in common with the *Daily* newsroom I've toured in the last few years.

AP: How are they different?

KS: My best friend was a manual Royal typewriter. I think there was, maybe, one or two electric IBMs in the entire newsroom. All of us hammered out our stories on these manual typewriters. There were edited by hand with pencil after the pages of the story were glued together, one following the other. After they were edited and copy edited in the basement of Murphy Hall, which was a place of extreme temperatures and little comfort, they would be sent by a runner, a guy with tennis shoes, from Murphy Hall, the four blocks to the corner of Oak [Street Southeast] and Washington [Avenue Southeast], the production office, I mentioned, which was at 720 Washington. He would run up three flights of stairs in a rat-infested, falling down building, to the production office up on the third floor. There was this area with video display terminals and some computers and some production equipment and these stories would all be typed by typists into the computer. It would be proofread by people working on the computers. Then, they would be shot out and the stories would be pasted up.

AP: There were computers at the production office but not at the reporters' office?

KS: Not any. It was as low tech as it could possibly be. There was nothing in the *Daily* worth stealing. There were times on the weekend if you couldn't get into Murphy Hall because you didn't have a key to Murphy Hall, which a few of us had, you could easily get into the *Daily* simply by opening a window and climbing through. We had no need for security because we had very little worth stealing, other than cameras and I suppose they were locked in the dark room or taken home by the photographers. Now, they've got very sophisticated security and millions of dollars worth of lovely equipment. As a matter of fact, I think the *Daily's* computer and pagination systems are more sophisticated than those we have here. [laughter]

AP: Could you sketch your rise at the *Star and Tribune*, if we were to go back to 1980? Talk me through, because it must have been a very unusual initiation. Here you are, a rookie in the *Star and Tribune* engaged in a major First Amendment lawsuit.

KS: Yes.

AP: Can you sketch a little bit what you did at the *Star and Tribune* and how one finds one's way around there?

KS: It's funny... My hiring was a fluke and there were many people who thought the editors who hired me were crazy. It was pretty rare for anyone to be hired straight from the *Daily* into the *Star Tribune*. It happened by it was rare. But, it was unheard of for anyone to be hired straight from the *Daily* onto the editorial page.

AP: And that's what happened?

KS: That's what happened. I came here writing editorials. I've had precisely the same job and the same telephone number for nineteen years.

AP: Do you remember who hired you?

KS: Oh, yes. I was hired by Bob Giruard, G-i-r-u-a-r-d, who was editor on the editorial page and Steve Isaacs, who was editor of the *Minneapolis Star*. The two of them came to hear me speak once at the Press Club when I was talking about how the First Amendment belongs even to nineteen year olds. I guess they must have liked what they heard, because they invited me to spend the summer as an intern and, at the end of the summer, Bob Giruard pulled into his office and said, "How would you like to stay?" Of course, I was overjoyed. I remember I went out and bought a real stereo system. [laughter] The odd thing is that, in a way, there has been no rise. I've had the same job all along. I love writing editorials. I believe it's the highest calling in journalism. It's certainly the case that this is where I really learned to write. I've had many wonderful teachers. I've covered courts and the law, and social policy and ethics, and medicine pretty much since I came. To round out the story, I've received a number of writing awards. The one that I'm proudest of is the National Society of Professional Journalists editorial writing award, which came for a series I wrote in the spring of 1997 called "Learning to Die." It was a week-long series on medical care at the end of life, talking about how we need to learn to die better—[laughter]—and a number of other ones over time.

AP: Can you explain—I don't think the average person necessarily knows—journalism 101, the difference between the editorial page and the rest of the newspaper and a little bit about how it's structured? I gather from what you said that your editorial page assignments would be focused on the three areas that you mentioned: law, medicine, and social policy. How many other colleagues have the same job and what would their beats be?

KS: The editorial page is the part of the newspaper that expresses the opinions of the institution. Virtually every newspaper in the country has an editorial page and publishes at least a couple editorials every day. An editorial speaks with an institutional voice. It expresses the sentiments of the newspaper. So, I work for an opinion factory. I work with about ten other writers and our job is to decide what this newspaper thinks about important issues. The way subject matter, turf area, is divided depends on the interests, the talents, and the skills of the various writers who come together at the table.

AP: Do you meet once a day to sort of say...?

KS: We meet every morning to talk about what we want the voice to say today and what we want it to say this week and what each of us is working on. For instance, I might say, as I did yesterday morning, "I'm writing an editorial about the Internet and the power that it gives to dissidents in countries ruled by repressive regimes." Then, somebody else might say, "I'm writing about the United Nations and the obligation the U.S. Congress has to fund it generously." A third person might say, "I'm working on a piece on light-rail transit. I think we ought to argue thus and such about that." So, we're looking both at tomorrow and at the week ahead. We're juggling long-term projects and our short-term obligations to speak about matters that we think a newspaper ought to speak about.

AP: Let me ask a lay example. Would you be likely to run an editorial on pilot safety following the [John F.] Kennedy [Junior] death, because of sort of a timely issue that pops in?

KS: We might. We certainly felt obliged to comment on the Kennedy death. There are certain things you can't avoid mentioning and that's one of them. Whatever every one is talking about, we feel we must also talk about, even if you haven't anything to say. The whole question of pilot safety... maybe we would, maybe we wouldn't. It would depend on whether anyone felt that it was pressing and there was something fundamental that was exposed by J.F.K. Jr's crash.

AP: I suppose also an editorial writer feeling a passion on this theme?

KS: Yes. For instance, I write a fair amount about population control, reproductive rights, and foreign aid because I think these things are very important and that they are under-attended by our public servants and by the populous. So, I write about those things a lot because I care.

AP: Has anybody done a history of... I've read Jim Alcott's history of the *Star and Tribune* [*History of Cowles Media Company*]. I can't remember right now whether he talks much about the editorial page and its policies.

KS: I don't think anyone has done such a thing.

AP: They must have done it on other newspapers because it's a very interesting institution.

KS: Yes. There have been studies of editorial pages and how they operate. I know that our editorial page has been cited in some of those larger studies, but as far as how things have gone for this editorial page, over time, I don't know.

I think you were trying to get at, talking about my career, that there is a natural progression that occurs as one settles into a career as an editorial writer and explores new territory. For instance, I spent many a year writing solely about domestic policy and I'm now starting to get interested in foreign policy issues. For instance, this past year, I've been both to India and Greece for the newspaper and have written about the public policy issues that come up as a consequence of what I see there. For all writers, I think, the personal and professional are very closely linked. One of the lovely things about being an editorial writer is that you can follow your curiosities and your product comes very much by virtue of your internal deliberation.

AP: One question that occurs to me is was there an editorial writer that was assigned to the university as a topic?

KS: Yes. There was then and there is now and it's never been me. Early on, I was not the assigned person, in part, because it was considered that I had a conflict of interest.

AP: Can you tell me who the editorial writer...?

KS: The editorial writer who covered the university when I was at the *Daily* and thereafter at the *Minneapolis Star* was Austin Wehrwein, W-e-h-r-w-e-i-n. He's very much alive and living in St. Anthony Park in St. Paul.

AP: I'm trying to remember the reporter that did the stories on the University Hospitals.

KS: Joe Rigert.

AP: Joe Rigert is a reporter, not an editorial page writer?

KS: Right, he's a reporter.

AP: Am I correct that he has had the university beat?

KS: No, you're wrong. I think he's always been sort of a special projects reporter. He was covering the Medical School because he thought there was something there—and boy! was he right. Back when I was editor of the *Daily*, I know that Jeff Brown, who is long gone, was covering the university for the *Star*. I'm trying to remember who was doing it for the *Tribune*... some woman. I don't remember.

AP: One of the things we do as we draw to the end of these interviews is ask people: Are there topics that you would like to either expand on or that I didn't ask you about that you would like to add? Again, this is public record.

KS: Ann, I have a few things you might want to read.

AP: Okay. That would be wonderful.

KS: I have in front of me a speech I gave May 7, 1993, on "Women in Journalism." I was on a panel with some other writers talking about [unclear] female at the *Minnesota Daily*.

AP: Oh, that would be interesting.

KS: I was the first woman editor and—I don't know what the ratio is—most of the editors of the *Daily* have been male. It's kind of an interesting recollection because it talked about the sexism I

encountered at the *Daily*. I talked about some of the odd things that happened around the time of my election. For instance:

When I decided to run for editor of the *Daily* in 1979, the group that arose to oppose me was almost exclusively male. After I won the backing of the board in spite of their opposition and as I waited to assume the editorship, that group of young men set to work on an end of the year humor edition. It included an avalanche of sexual and racist humor.

AP: Interesting.

KS: The men put out the humor issue with the knowledge that their purpose in doing it was to make it miserable for me.

AP: Wow! So, spend the next five years of your life defending these people.

KS: Yes. I say:

During my year, we doubled reporter's pay, reorganized the newsroom, redesigned the newspaper, published a flurry of investigative stories, pestered the "U" administration, won a bunch of awards, but I didn't not spend a day of my editorship without feeling the icy stare of the disgruntled gang of fellows who had first opposed my candidacy. They staked out a corner of the newsroom, which they labeled "The Cigar Corner," and they sat there writing an occasional story and smoking a mountain of cigars.

AP: Oh, that's wonderful.

KS: These were the days when asking someone not to smoke was a bold affront. There was nothing subtle about their hostility toward me, their cold silence, their under-the-breath comments, their refusal to join in, which should have been a group quest to strengthen the *Daily*. There was nothing subtle about the graffiti that often appeared in the men's rest room the [unclear] speculation about the lives of *Daily* women, including mine. And there was certainly nothing subtle about the in-house publications that the Cigar Corner gang Xeroxed and distributed throughout the newsroom every week or two. It was called the *Cigar Corner Bulletin* and it was a full service newsletter. It featured a diatribe against the idiotic policies of the editor, a great variety of concocted anecdotes in which I starred as protagonist and, of course, some art work. The artwork was often pornography, reproduced from *Hustler* and altered with photographs of me and others to deliver a tailor-made insult. I remember a large picture that depicted me and the president of the Board of Pub engaged in oral sex. Its message was hard to miss.

AP: Oh, gracious.

KS: So, it goes on talking about that and expands to talk about how the sexism that I encountered at the Minneapolis Star in the early 1980s was penny-ante after what I went through at the *Daily*. [laughter] I talk about what I encountered at the *Star* was paternalism, which was kind of easy to deal with after that. I'll mail it to you.

AP: That's terrific.

KS: You can mine it and quote it however you want.

AP: That would be absolutely wonderful.

I wanted to ask one thing because it's something I haven't completely understood about the university and that is: What is the Board of Publications? I've seen it in your books and I haven't understood what it is.

KS: The Board of Publications—now, this is assuming it's still the same—the way it was then, is that some of its members were elected by students through an all-student election at the same time that student government people are elected. There were maybe three or six seats that were chosen at large. Then, there are also some faculty members on it, a few of whom I think are elected from the Faculty Senate. There are some representatives from administration on it and there are some representatives from Civil Service and there are a couple of faculty members from the Journalism School on it. It's their job to hire the editor of the *Daily* and also to oversee any other publications at the "U" that might be getting student services fees. They act as a publisher of the *Daily*. The *Daily* editor reports to the Board of Student Publications, Board of Pub, as we used to call it. The Board of Pub's power over the editor and what the editor does at the *Daily* is circumscribed. It's very limited. For instance, while the board [unclear] to ask questions about content and controversies that are brewing, it can't do anything to put pressure on the editor to alter the content of the *Daily*.

AP: Did you have any trouble with that during your year?

KS: The relationship between the Board of Pub and the editor is always a daunting one. Usually there are a couple of members on it who are just difficult personalities. But, I got along pretty well with the Board of Pub. There have been years when things have been awful and years when things have been innocuous. I would say my...

AP: Now, your year was the big humor issue. Did the Board of Pub take positions that backed the *Daily* board or did they...?

KS: They weren't delighted with it, but I don't recall that they issued any kind of condemnation and when we decided to sue the "U," they were supportive of that.

AP: That's what I was sort of driving at.

It would seem like a somewhat less satisfactory form of student experience to be on the Board of Pub versus being an active reporter or a writer for one of the publications.

KS: Oh, yes! [laughter] You got that one right.

AP: It seems like a strange kind of role to even have.

KS: The Board of Pub, in the past, has tended to draw people [unclear] the *Daily* and want to control it. That's one reason why there's always stress. Most people who want to be reporters walk in the door of the *Daily*. Most people who are interested in student government and exerting censorious control try to get on the Board of Pub.

AP: [laughter] Interesting, yes.

KS: It's true, sorry to say.

AP: I have one other question. One of the things we are finding as we're looking at the university campus life in the 1950s, which would probably not have been at all true in your era, is a very curious dichotomy between the kind of macho, international science and technology research and a rather juvenile, sheltered, inward looking domestic life of the campus. In the 1950s, there were housemothers. There were teas. The yearbook of 1950 has eight pages devoted to queens: engineering queen, ag[riculture] queen. There were queens everywhere and a sort of very genteel view of women's roles.

KS: [laughter] Yes.

AP: So that you have this almost schizophrenic world outside and, then, sort of the cheerleaders and Boy Scouts at games and athletes on white horses riding out into the sunset of winning the Rose Bowl or something. It's a very interesting kind of thing. The only work we've been able to find that helps us make a little bit of sense out of that is Elaine Tyler May's book, *War on the Home Front*, where she contrasts the international scene of the Cold War with a kind of containment philosophy in the wife and children and family sheltered from these horrible things on the outside world. Do you have any reflections on your time as a student, which must have been a much more liberated time for women.

KS: Oh, yes. I think we were hippies. We were at the end of an era, probably. I would say 92 percent of the people that worked at the *Daily* were far to the left of center. We had all of the traits that you might expect of college students of that era. These were kids who smoked marijuana, who were very well acquainted with the sexual revolution and who had nothing good to say about the Greeks, as we called them, the fraternities and sororities. There was a lot of strife and tension between the *Daily* and that community. To be a journalist, in any event, is to be an iconoclast. It's to be skeptical. We exhibited all of those traits, I would say. Our bread and butter, our life's work, was to challenge convention and that's what we were about. I think what we represented was one half, probably the bigger half, of a rift that occurred in the 1970s between the old and the new, tradition and the unorthodox. We were all, mostly, on one side of the street and those few who came to us from the ranks of the fraternities and sororities, college Republicans, had a hard time, were definitely in the minority. I don't know if that will help you at all.

AP: One other question. We haven't talked about diversity and civil rights. Did you have any experiences on that topic?

KS: This was a time when we were definitely conjuring consciousness about diversity in the newsroom. I had an Affirmative Action Plan and was vigorously trying to recruit writers of color and writers from international backgrounds. We had a once a week thing, a special page called "Ethnic Perspective," that was devoted to the needs and concerns of international students. We had a number of black reporters. We always had a hard time holding on to them. I think a lot of that was economic. Even though you were able to pay almost a living wage to reporters, that probably worked if you weren't having to bear your whole tuition, if you were getting some help from your parents. I think some of these students just couldn't make it and work at the *Daily*. We definitely had a consciousness about that, but it wasn't the kind of full-blown preoccupation that's more appropriate and that I think it is today—not that the results are any different.

AP: Are there any other things that you'd like to comment on?

KS: Ann, I think I've got somebody waiting for me downstairs, so I probably should go.

AP: I appreciate this very much. I will send you the permission form and it will have my address so that if you want to be kind enough to send me those things you referred to, you'd be able to do that.

KS: Excellent.

AP: Good. Thank you very much.

KS: You bet. Thank you.

AP: Take care. Bye.

KS: Goodbye.

[End of Tape 1, Side 2]

[End of the Interview]

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