

**LEXINGTON ORAL HISTORY PROJECTS, INC.**

**Interview**  
***Lucille Longview***  
**November 18, 1992**

*Interview conducted by Lenore Fenn*  
*Videotape length 74 minutes*

INT: To start the interview, tell us a little bit about yourself and how you came to Lexington.

LL: I'd look at this experience as a time to look at my life through the lens of the whole Vietnam experience. So I will go back some distance. The Cold War is what we're talking about actually, I think, and how we were fighting that Cold War. Early on in Minneapolis I was associated with the University on a project there that had connections with the State Department. The State Department was bringing people from other countries. Whether they do this now all the time, I don't know, but at that time people from other countries were being [taken on planned tours] throughout our country for various reasons. I often was showing the Midwest, Northwest aspects of that to visiting dignitaries. And it began to have a trend that Southeast Asian visitors were being shown around in our country, an exceptional number compared to other areas in the world. So I was doing that. At the same time my husband was Director of Military Products Research at Minneapolis Honeywell. So we were having the possibility of some family differences as this goes on.

Then in 1966 he took a year at Stanford University as a professor, and that gave me the option of auditing classes and that was great. I audited the class in United States and Southeast Asia [history]. It was truly a very revealing experience to have the day-to-day activity of the past administrations from the end of the Second World War leading up to that present.

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At the end of the year when we didn't go back to Minneapolis but came here instead—my husband with an appointment at NASA. My first outreach when I arrived in Belmont where we first stopped was to attend an anti-Vietnam [War] meeting. That was in 1967. So my attitude towards getting us out of Vietnam as soon as possible really took hold when I was in Stanford. Of course, the students already were practically tearing apart that portion of the university that was leading into research that was developing things for South Vietnam, for Vietnam in particular. My own background was different from what it was when I left Minneapolis. I was beginning to feel that I needed to take a step, because I thought this was immoral, what we were doing. We then moved to Lexington and bought this house in 1970. Although I lived in two other houses and short time rentals I was really a newcomer in Lexington when the event happened at the Green in 1971. I had at that time made some connections. I wish I could trace down the beginning of the National Organization of Women here in Lexington, for instance and exactly what we were doing at that time, because I have a feeling that... The event of Patriots Day in 1971 was significant in my mind for what was happening on Memorial Day—the six weeks difference [between the two events].

INT: What was it?

LL: I have nothing written about who initiated and tried to get us into the Patriots Day march as a peace group—it's in my memory that the National Organization of Women made that effort. There was some awkwardness, to say the least, about getting permission to march as a peace group in the Patriots Day Parade. And that “No, we could not allow anyone to march with us who was not from Lexington.” So when we found ourselves in this little band of women—I think there were no men marching with us—between the artillery and the veterans marching, this proved to be for

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me a significant move. Because one of the banners we carried was “1775 British Go Home,” and “1971 Yankees Come Home.” There were peace banners; there were other statements. But that was very much the reverse of what was happening on Patriots Day, what they were trying to say in their publicity. That march was so meaningful to me because we touched so many people along the viewing line. They would come over and join us, and our group got longer and longer, [depending on] how far some of them walked, because [they said] “Me, too; I want this!” There was a general ripple of applause as we proceeded. It was that activity, to say to the people even in the midst of the celebration of war and our annual ritual of “indoctrination”—here came the “indoctrination” for peace trying to insert itself in there. That was for me a significant move.

INT: I would like to follow up with you as you portrayed the event, when you were marching with your colleagues. How did you feel being between the different military-oriented contingents? What was the feeling of that moment?

LL: I’ve tried to recall that. A number of things were happening in my life as well. I was making steps into saying publicly what had been a divisive subject in our household because of my husband's working for the government now at NASA. Formerly he had worked in research at Honeywell. This was a divisive thing in our family. My stepping out had a number of [effects on] how I felt. What I felt was timidity. I was shy. I put notes down that indeed [it] was not as frightening as I had anticipated it would be once I got into making the move and moving with others and finding the degree to which we were accepted in that group. There were a number of women, and we had talked back and forth about the difficulty of getting into the [Patriot’s Day] march and so forth. (I’d like someone else who may have clearer memories of this to try to bring that forth.) I think

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[there] was an inkling that a new consciousness was arising in this community. For me the beginning of that was six weeks before the Vietnam veterans' march<sup>1</sup>. That for me was a significant happening.

I cannot really say what [influenced me] except that when we came here I had joined the Unitarian Universalist Church on the Green because John Wells was there and working in an area I was comfortable with. He was [involved with] the Shea-Wells Bill<sup>2</sup> and so forth, bringing into focus aspects of this war. So I had joined the church, and we were aware of the development, and that people were going to be serving food and so forth. In my notes I said I knew when I got up Saturday morning that I was going to be aware of the development [of plans to have the Vietnam veterans march onto the Green], and that people were going to meet the veterans out at the park where they had gathered. Jean Baxter is a contemporary of mine, and I had called her and asked her if she would drive us out and stay for lunch. Her daughter Ann, who is no longer living, and I stayed and marched in [to the Green] with the veterans. The nighttime with the veterans began there. I will read an excerpt of my reaction from that:

“What did I expect of these veterans? I don't know quite. But their gentleness and orderliness was almost disarming. No scamps, these guys. The Selectmen should come out and meet these men, and sense the appeal of the entire group. I joined a couple of them. One a student at Bowdoin. And another a man in a wheelchair with some metal forearm braces lying at his side.

‘Whose braces?’

‘Mine,’ he said, the veteran before me.

‘What happened?’ I asked, as gently as I knew how.

‘A booby trap,’ he replied quietly.

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<sup>1</sup> The Vietnam veterans march on the Green took place on Memorial Day Weekend that same year, 1971.

<sup>2</sup> The Shea-Wells bill was the joint project of John Wells and Representative Jim Shea of Newton. They formulated a bill that was passed by the Massachusetts legislature; it empowered the Attorney General of Massachusetts to go into federal court on behalf of citizens of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and challenge the legality of the Vietnam War on the basis of its constitutionality. The bill was signed into law by Governor Francis Sargent in 1978. Upon appeal the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear the case.

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‘Were you badly injured?’

‘My legs were all messed up,’ he said.

‘I guess it has taken quite awhile to get the use of them again,’ I commented.

‘These aren’t mine,’ he replied, making it as easy for me as possible.”

That was a real jolt, and an introduction to what these men were bringing to us. And the effort they were making to bring us the message. To believe that we as a community were denying them a welcome was very disappointing.

I felt myself in Lexington by this time to be an outsider. I think Lexington was suffering growing pains from the development along Route 128. Many of us were newcomers. I would be interested in knowing what proportion of the Lexington residents were actually quite new to the community [and] were from other areas of the country, and [whether] their backgrounds had been impacted [by living in] other areas. My experience had [grown out of] tales of Town Meeting, that if you want to speak up, you need to have been here for a length of time. That was reported to me...[that] was the reception John Wells [received] when he wanted to speak one time at Town Meeting. I now feel that you don't really belong to Lexington if you hadn't been born here. And you can't quite bring that to happen if you've come later! It stayed with me. I have never quite felt—I don't now feel—that I'm a legal, authentic Lexingtonian.

The activities around the development of [the celebration of the bicentennial] coming in four years—I think that's another factor—[shaped] Patriots Days more and more. The bicentennial was coming, and it was building up. Each of those Patriots Days became more and more of an anticipation of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary. So what I think of as “indoctrination” of the importance of war and the importance of celebrating war was really building up at this time as well. I think there were a number of factors.

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INT: Could I ask what caused you to want to live in Lexington in the first place? You were living in Belmont and then you came to this town. Was there something about Lexington that drew you?

LL: It was circumstances. It wasn't because we had children who would go to...you know. We had rented a place in Belmont while we were looking to buy. That family was abroad for a year and it occurred to me that they just might sell if we gave them a good price. So we would rent for a period of time some place, then they would clear out and we'd buy the house. When it came to the actual happening—we had lived that year at One Constitution Avenue which made me feel very patriotic—the man returned our deposit and said, "I can't go through with my part of the contract. It's either my marriage or my agreement." She felt unable—being British—to give up her country and her most recent home. Actually we bought that house twice. We started renting here and we rented another place, because we were temporarily in New England we thought, but NASA was closing. My husband was feeling that he needed to try to get his department moved, if he could, to the Department of Transportation. So our life was very uncertain. But we were now living in Lexington as renters, so I put my name here and was told there weren't a lot of houses. Can you imagine, you really jump if there's a house for sale?

INT: I don't want to deflect you from your interpretation of what's going on, but if you would like to go back to that day and hearing about walking in with the veterans—what other memories do you have of that?

LL: I don't have a lot of memories, and I didn't record anything about that actual walk-in. I remember our determination to go and try to see the Selectmen, and actually doing that. Then knowing there was going to be the seven o'clock meeting. When I had gone off in the morning my husband definitely made a statement that he wasn't going to be involved. But when I

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came home and said that I was going to this meeting, and that if I didn't come home later I might be sleeping with the veterans on the Green and possibly be put in jail, that began to alert him to an interest different than what he had had in the morning. I had felt he was deterred because of his contract with the government. (I don't want to really say that was his feeling. It's very hard, I think, for one to interpret what the other person was feeling). Anyhow, when I was possibly going to be jailed, or possibly [going to] sleep on the Green, because he was an outdoorsman and "What an idea, sleeping on the Green!" he went that night with me to the evening meeting. I think that what happened there in a patronizing way was what caused him to sleep on the Green. He was not demonstrating for the veterans, but demonstrating more against an idea, the idea that was proposed there. I've looked at that "consistency" which was needed, the Selectmen felt "We've had a policy..." That is the saddest thing that I feel. We need to turn to what Emerson said, "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines." The fact that they needed to be consistent, regardless of extenuating circumstances...it didn't seem to me that if they broke this one time that that was going to endanger them in the future. I felt that not only was Emerson speaking to us in that way, but also what the "Prisoners of War"<sup>3</sup> put on the front of their statement on this is just so true of what was happening in Lexington.

"'United States,' the ages plead, presidents past and underground  
'Go put your creed into your deed, nor speak with double tongue.  
For land and sea don't understand, nor skies without a frown  
Sea rights for which the one hand fights,  
The other cloven down.'"

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<sup>3</sup> "Prisoners of War" was a term the Vietnam veterans used on their flyers ("We are all Prisoners of War") to suggest that everyone was "imprisoned" by the Vietnam War. "

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I can't imagine who put this flyer together. I think it is a terrific statement.

INT: Did you read Emerson in Minnesota? Where did you first discover him?

LL: At my program at the University of Minnesota. It was for those women whose children were grown. We had women from twenty-seven to seventy-two actually enrolled. It was an experimental program, realizing that women now are going to have many years of living after their children have left home, so they started a program at the University. I was fortunate to be involved in that year after year. The first year was "The Arts of Reading." It started off with the analysis of this particular statement.

So the consistency is one thing. I think we expect people to be consistent in a conversation. But to make that hold years afterward... You may change your mind, you may get new information, so the foolish consistency is the one that expects... And that was happening to us in this last election. Because it was pointed out time after time, inconsistencies over a period of time—you learn new things and you take new stands. We have to permit that to happen.

INT: What do you think was on the Selectmen's minds to force this emphasis on consistency? What were they worried about? You mentioned the difficulty in getting into the parade, for example, as an anti-war group and the constraints on that.

LL: I've divided the Selectmen into two groups, because there were two who wanted to reconsider. That fits this "foolish consistency." They were really [saying]: "Let's look at this again and take that vote." And they then reverted and did not vote to do it; Riffin, Kenney, did not the second time around. So the actual [vote] was three to two, I think, that held the place.

I don't know how to put myself in other people's perspective, particularly if I haven't lived in their community very long. But I would say that



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tradition has a vice grip on this community, not just then, but it continues. Although we make a great point of the liberty that we have brought about: “We've had the revolution!” The current “revolution” of awareness and consciousness can't be heard because the word “revolution” said we *did* it. We *did* it. I felt that my experience in this community has done this double stance that this POW article did. Actually when we came home from the meeting I started to get ready to go, and my husband was gathering things. I'm saying, “Why are you going? This now gets into your contract.” I had the feeling that he needed to be on the Green for a number of reasons. But if he were to sit here and tell you, none of these might have been foremost. The idea of sleeping on the Green—because he's such an outdoorsman, the image of that—actually he put on his hat, overcoat, bow tie, white shirt—this was the image of the person who was speaking back to the Selectmen. His sleeping on the Green was something he needed to do if the opportunity was there. Now *his* interpretation of that might be very different. In fact, he became a spokesperson. I didn't hear his response as we were being bused to Concord—we had double seats—I was here, he was here in the middle, and beside him was one of the reporters who was questioning him. I could hear the reporter's question, but I didn't always hear his answer. He, in a way, subsumed my stance by being present, as men easily did when you had a position. I was incidental to that, but he became instrumental in that particular situation. That was where we were. So we went and we got our time at court.

INT: What did you gather together to bring down to the Green? Do you remember what paraphernalia you took along, knowing you were going to sleep out?

LL: I've been trying to think. I think I just had a sleeping bag. I have a down bag and I was comfortable, but most of the time I wasn't in my

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sleeping bag. I truthfully don't remember. I know Hugo was in a bag because he was lying there—he came to sleep on the Green—he was literally involved in that commitment, sleeping on the Green.

INT: Do you remember anything about the police coming, or the directions that were given, or the interaction as people were waiting, the buses pulled up? Were you afraid?

LL: No, not afraid. I didn't see people as being afraid. I saw us as being anxious to go along. Actually we didn't get on a bus. When the buses came and took load after load—and without pushing you didn't—you had to be along in time if you made it on. And we didn't get there. The buses came back to the corners and left, which said to us, no more busing. There were a hundred of us [remaining] on the Green. It was becoming almost dawn. I turned and I said to Hugo, "I believe if we would drive down there, we could get in." The policeman standing nearby said, "I think you probably could." So we drove down and knocked on the door [of the Public Works garage]. People let us in, and then they [the police] realized they were going to get a run on the jail and they didn't have the facilities, hygienic facilities, to cope with this crowd. They had a problem. Others who came to the door didn't get in, as far as I know. That was our good fortune that nobody had preceded us, apparently. I think it took the authorities a while to understand that there were people who really insisted on being in this group that were going to be with the veterans all the way. When the police came, it seemed to me that they were expecting some resistance somewhere, and were probably quite surprised to find that not only was there [no] resistance, there was interest in getting on these buses and getting along. We had all agreed—there were meetings and so forth at the time—that there would be certainly one-to-one [veterans and townspeople] and maybe two-to-one with all the veterans who were boarding the buses that the lay people would

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distribute themselves in such a way that they [the authorities] didn't just get to select out the veterans and take [only] them.

By the time we were there—and the policemen's response I think showed that—they had come to see it in a new reaction and a new light. I think it was the most unexpected thing for this town and for the authorities to see that there could be an expression of dissent that didn't come through voting—that people were looking for other ways to say to the government, “No!” Since that time we've taken to our feet—how many marches have we been in, in Washington, DC!—and we put our bodies on the line where the vote used to be. I don't know what research there is as to [how often] physically putting your body there [had been done] by people in the country before this. We certainly have taken it on, plus taking the vote by putting on the ballot issues that concern us. We're taking new ways of expressing ourselves politically. That time [it] was, for some reason, very surprising to the authorities in Lexington.

I read in the papers that in the Department of Public Works we played cards, and we were divided by ages. I didn't think that when we registered they'd put age groups in some. They set us up alphabetically; we went to court alphabetically. I don't remember being set aside by age. I can remember that as the day came and people were anxious to move around, that we opened the big door and ran out on the pavement and made a circle and ran in circles for exercise until we were sort of gently herded back into the barn again. Although we were given the second statement, “You citizens don't need to go. You don't have to get arrested; you could choose not to.” Of course they couldn't arrest us all; they didn't have any place to put us. I think some people did go home probably as the night went on, because I know there were people there earlier in the evening that I didn't see with their names on the arrest sheet. But the excitement for me, of course, was to

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have First Parish [church] opening its doors to the veterans, [and] having the [church] bell ring as we were being [arrested]. I felt as though this was really speaking for me. I realize now that it didn't speak for everyone, that there was a lot of concern that the minister was...Harding was there—and the church was open for people on the Green.

INT: You spoke before about these two, in particular, and I wondered if you...

LL: I think these are both [pictures taken at] the [Public Works] barn, the pictures of the man and wife apparently...I don't know whether the man or the wife were the ones who were arrested, or [whether one] was coming to see how the other was. The number of people who came to the barn with food, with concern, with interest—the people in the barn weren't the total number of people that were really wanting to be supporters.

The limitations that the Selectmen put on us was the most wonderful thing to happen to those veterans because of the publicity it gave them, with the idea that there was so much support out there. So the sum total [result] was a total reversal of what may have been their hopes to sort of shut out the new stance. There was a lot of concern for people to say, “Maybe it's not my country right or wrong—I go with it.” I think the surprise of the changing of ideas... I think we're in a tremendous time of change now—this was certainly on the surface.

INT: Did the First Parish Church under Minister John Wells seem to be organized with other churches, or just within the church itself?

LL: What I know I know of is that his peripheral work, the work he was doing on the Shea-Wells Bill and so forth, may well have been what was threatening to a number of people who had been there [in the church] over many years.

INT: Would you describe the Shea-Wells Bill?

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LL: My memory of the Shea-Wells Bill was that it was based on the fact that war had not been declared, that you can't conscript anyone for an undeclared war, and they tried to get that—and possibly did [get it]—through the Massachusetts legislature. I certainly am not saying that's it, [but] that's my memory of what it was about. It was a different approach to try to stop the war than had come [along] until then. It did get a lot of publicity statewide—the bill at the legislature. Yes, I was new enough to the town that I didn't quite have it all figured out. I was certainly not right in sync with everyone in the church. See, going down Mass Avenue or going toward the Center, there's lined up the Minute Man with this flag always waving above the war symbol, with the church behind it, the church steeple. Before I saw it in that light, while my patriotism was still very high, it was a very uplifting vision to see all three together. Now that I've turned and looked as this in another way [I see] how both the church, and the government, [and] the nation supports war in many cases, and how destructive patriotism is. Of all the destructive “isms” it may well be the most, because it takes us into fighting foreign wars and being ready to support that. But I've had that change of understanding since I've lived in Lexington. My own feelings at that time, I'm sure, were very much in sync with wanting to support the government but not being in support of the government.

INT: Go back to the Department of Public Works. What happened? You had some effort to exercise and people were visiting through the windows. Then morning came, breakfast. How did you get...?

LL: Morning was there. This is in April, and it's three AM before they even start busing people. I would guess it's past four in the morning; dawn is coming. We haven't been asleep very much. And there's some effort to get some rest. I do know that I dozed off for a while. But soon breakfast was

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coming from the neighborhood. So I don't hold memories of a long time when we didn't know what was coming next.

I don't know who from First Parish was in touch with Larry Adler, our lawyer, as to how do we plead and what do we do and so forth. I do know that that was one of the things that was—I'm not sure that Larry was Chair of the denomination, of the Church, at that time. We knew his legal ability, and a number of people knew him. So we were in touch with how to proceed for our own safety—and how does one plead, what does one do here?

INT: Did he know what you were charged with?

LL: No. I was supposed to have been charged with “disorderly conduct,” but they withdrew that one. We were charged, I think, with disobeying an order and sleeping on the Green. That was the one we paid our five dollars [fine] for. It was an experience of looking at how the legal institution works.

INT: Did you pay five dollars at the garage?

LL: No.

INT: How did you get to Concord? What happened when you went into court?

LL: I told you that they arranged us alphabetically. So the buses came to take us to court, [and] we loaded alphabetically, according to a list. Somehow along there some name got inserted between my name and my husband's. I hadn't remembered that, but I noticed somewhere on my notes that we were separated by one name. The ride over, there was the man interviewing my husband. We were all there. There was a certain amount of solemnity. It wasn't a rah-rah experience, but I didn't sense it was a threatening experience, because there were enough of us in this that we all felt a certain amount of satisfaction rather than threat to be able to have

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made a statement about what we were doing. And certainly in support of people who had experienced this at the very depths, have been really experiencing and losing their limbs, and being far from home, and maybe alone, and [to] have gone through that experience and now saying, “We shouldn't do this; this is immoral,”—to be able to be with that group of people who had a very common reason for being there, and yet each had a very little specific difference in their background because of our... Our history always impacts how we do things and how we see things. You were asking about what we did in the barn?

INT: Or in the court.

LL: We were going to the court. We got out of the bus and filed in again, single file, and with our hands behind our heads—the I-can't-shoot-you position. [Laughter.] And sat alphabetically, and waited for [the judge] to call our names. We pleaded guilty. And we paid our fine. I was happy to read that money had been contributed so that the veterans' fines were paid. I subsequently wondered, did those men have to pay? I think they probably didn't. I remember coming home afterward and not staying with the veterans to see them off at the Green; I didn't do that. We went to get our car which was down at the barn, of course, and came on home. We weren't involved with the group, but we knew people who were behind, helping the veterans be transported.

INT: You were at the courthouse and you got finished with your business there, and you didn't have your car.

LL: We were bused back, because we were all there without our cars. I don't know if they took people back to the Green. I can't remember whether we were taken to the Green or walked to the barn, or somebody took us to the barn. But I do know we had left our car down there.

INT: So what did you learn about the legal system as a result of that?

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LL: The legal system is made to serve the purposes of the powerful. It's made by the powerful for their own purposes. That it grinds away, often interpreted by people who indeed see tradition, their need to uphold the law, and the law upholds the past. It's hard for me to have the high regard for the law that I had once had—and I certainly was a law-abiding citizen, and a patriotic citizen, and [one who] truly didn't question my government. I was taught the history, and that was the way it was. It never occurred to me that women had been playing a part all those years, that a lot of others had played parts. I suppose the one revealing thing was that I got hold of a history of the revolution from the British point of view, and finding that, and realizing the extent to which we didn't play fair. We didn't line up and march and retreat. When they were in retreat, we got behind stonewalls and shot. That wasn't the way you play war. That's what the Vietnamese were teaching us. We had played war differently than you do. So we play war in our tradition, were trying to lay that tradition on Vietnam which was determined to survive. If you look at it, it was the small little country [that] was trying to fight off the power of the big one. That doesn't say anything about what I see as the whole European movement as it came and desecrated the population that was here already. That part, I think, we have yet to really pull up in history and name and own, and help our children see. But we also need to rewrite some of the history of the Revolutionary War and the whole bit.

It wasn't a “revolutionary” war. The Civil War was the revolutionary war. It turned things over a lot more than the Revolutionary War. The powerful people were still in power here. When we got through the war the rich still had the power and put it into the Constitution, the ownership of land and the right to vote and so forth. That war was a war of freedom from



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another [power], but it didn't turn anything upside down in our political thinking much.

INT: Our understanding from the records and things like that is that a short while after that event occurred, there was a meeting in Cary Hall and you did not attend. There were in the newspaper letters to the editor articles—do you recall? You have some of them. How did it impact you when you saw letters to the editor in the quantities that went in?

LL: I guess the effect was that I was pleased. I thought of writing myself, but did not do it. I have a feeling of what I put down here, my saying things again and again as to how I might say it if I wrote a letter. But I didn't. I don't think I followed that action with anything except my vote at the next election.

INT: How do you think it affected the town?

LL: Looking back, I didn't see the depth of division that must have happened as we're getting input now, if we try to make a move to bring that into focus. Although I don't know that, aside from the voting the Selectmen out [whether] I would know any political fallout of this. I'm sure if I were to have prowled my mind in trying to look at that and see what were some of the political consequences, I might have been able to do that. I think it's been buried to a large extent, the way history has buried so much of our past. History being written by the people who have been the winners will soon get lost—many of the momentous things that would help us in the next time around, even to see that there was a voice there. I've moved through feminism, and [know] there have been other movements and feminist movements that had been hidden from me—the idea that there was a “Woman's Bible.” I was just aghast to find that that could have been out of print, totally not circulated. And here it was. I was a woman and I hadn't known. That was what cracked open what I haven't known, and [also] many

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things about what women have done historically. What we've done has been erased.

We see in the Patriots Day battle [reenactment] that women run out and take care and nurture the men who are the fighters. That gives us a picture that that's what women were doing, and nothing else. We have lived through being not only dependents but acquiescent always. I don't now believe that. I think there's a lot of "her-story" that needs to be rewritten and added to "his-tory" [like] the project that's on in Boston to recognize women who have been active in Boston, and get that into the public schools—the Women's Heritage Trail—as indeed *his*-story plus *her*-story makes *the* story. And that is something we need to [have] come about, that it is not just that the powerful are the ones who make history. I certainly want you to know how much I think you're giving to this town, and to history, by what you're doing. Tremendous contribution.

INT: Can you outline the new material that shocked or surprised you in that course in California on the history of American relationships in Southeast Asia? Your eyes were really open to history you had not known about.

LL: I saw the Vietnam thing now as not just only to protect Vietnam and that section of the world from being taken over from this great threat in Russia and China—an opposite threat. We were doing what we say *they* were doing. We were in the effort to enlarge our power in the world. I never see our actions the same anymore, as a result of looking at that and saying, I wonder what the specifics behind all this are? And what this does to promote our power within the world? Which is something I hope we're beginning to see—the extent to which this nation has been invaders. In this hemisphere, in particular. And how we can really see that in the future? Looking back, who are we? We are Europeans who have come here, so

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we've come from a group who continue that, and we continue it. The whole fact that then we find the Orient and want to take that over. It was a dual vision of my government.

INT: I'm interested in how you influenced your husband. He was really jeopardizing his job when he went out that night, wasn't he?

LL: In our discussion subsequently I said (in some notes in other places) [that] he insisted he had not now signed a contract with the government in which he would not take a stand against the government. Whether that was offhand, what it meant I didn't know. I always had the opinion that my job was to help my husband in his career and not let anything interfere with it. And I certainly committed myself to doing that. Now I was making a stand that might not promote his career. That was a stance that was changing considerably. To see him also move in that [action] may have been much more meaningful to me than it was to him. I wish he were alive to give his version of what was going on there in his mind. We didn't talk it through as much as we might have at this distance from it and say what was going on back then. So I can only use my interpretation of what might have been his thinking. And what might have even been his situation now.

INT: Are there some sections of your notes that you would like to read?

LL: I think I've covered them all. I'll do the 19<sup>th</sup> of April. For some reason I was playing around with the 19<sup>th</sup> of April and the 30<sup>th</sup> of May in my thinking. And so I was putting it down various ways. And that I've talked to you about.

“April the 19<sup>th</sup>, 1971, the Patriots Day that topped them all. With only four years until the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Lexington, enthusiasm reaches a new pitch each year.”

This figure must be wrong; I've said 250,000.

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“250,000 watched the parade and the reenactment of the battle itself had taken place the day before. The enactment of the battle was new this year. And the horses’ hooves had torn the turf on the Minuteman Park. But we could overlook a thing like that. We could overlook a thing like that when it is all in memory of the fact that here, here in Lexington is the birthplace of liberty.

We're so proud of that, particularly proud of the town fathers who willingly permit the marches. The parade on that beautiful day was filled with marching bands, artillery, veterans of yesteryears, and Scouts and Bluebirds of all ages. About halfway along came our tiny band of peace marchers, a surprising jolt in all of this celebration of war.

‘1781, Red Coats Go Home, 1971 Yankees Come Home,’ said the signs, and a ripple of applause follows all the way. It was a pleasant experience. Not frightening as I had feared as I marched timidly, feeling my way into taking a position publicly in this conservative town.”

See, I said it all, generally. I think you’ve pretty much milked it.

INT: Do you think the events in Lexington affected the national policy and helped bring the war to an end?

LL: Yes, as just one little bit more that was piling in there. As the big march that had preceded this in Washington [that] Kerry had led, I think [it was] a week before or something like that...this was rippling out in places that [were] publicly seen. I think we dwell a lot on what happened because of the Selectmen’s stance on this. But what you're talking about is that it happened at all, and that the jailing thing was there [which] made this an additional image around the whole movement to get us out of Vietnam.

Lets see, where were we? Johnson had resigned already, hadn’t he? And decided not to run again. So he was getting the message. But it took us such a long time to wind that down! As I remember, well, my memory and my being affected by the Vietnam War is not yet over. I burst into tears [about] the Wall [the Vietnam Memorial], on TV, with that imagery. Fortunately

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that Wall says a very different message than the spires that we have previously put up. This one is going down, and the burial of names—this person, and this person. If that doesn't say something about the importance of a name... that's all we have of that person. And they go and touch it. You can tell I am so moved by that memorial—I couldn't have conceived of that one. I wish we could think of some way to commemorate what happened on the Green that would have the reverse symbolism almost of what it means to have a man up there with a gun.<sup>4</sup> That would say something about what went on when we took a stand for peace instead of in celebration of war.

INT: I wish you'd keep thinking about that.

LL: Are you thinking about it? I was thinking about maybe petitioning, eventually to get some plaque put up, maybe on the snow plow barn [Department of Public Work garage]. People would come to Lexington, and when they came to see the Minuteman they would realize that there's also another place they could visit where people made a gesture for peace. But I don't think it would be easy. Maybe the First Parish Church, if there were any harmony there. Put up a little plaque [that said] "On this place in 1971, 458 people representing perhaps half of the number who were here, were arrested who tried to bring about peace."

INT: I don't think we can look to the church.

LL: You're probably right. In my mind Unitarians, [one of] which I can claim to be, are assumed to be quite liberal. Relative to other denominations, they are. But relative to the total freedom from the power of patriarchal religions that we've known, I see us deeply imbedded in that. And that's taken me a long time to really say I can't support this church. But I still support it economically. I haven't brought my name off the rolls, but I

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<sup>4</sup> She is probably referring to the statue of a Minuteman that stands at the head of the Green.

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haven't been in attendance for a time. My change on the power of religion and my understanding of religion keeps happening. I grew up very much taken by the hand and led off to the Baptist Church and had it all. That's why that flag and steeple and gun all line up [on the Green] in such a meaningful way, and a reversed way from where [they were] at first.

INT: It's now a couple of decades after 1971. Can you imagine something of a similar nature occurring again in this town over an important issue? Have things changed? What do you think would happen?

LL: I see that as a very special time. As I said, the growth of [Route] 128, the moving of masses of people into what had been quite a small closed community. Suddenly you have this growth and lots of people who don't belong making the voice. I don't see that able to happen again in the same way because of what people have brought into the community with them. I don't see the end of our celebrating war. I think we'll go on indoctrinating our little ones. When I see the little Bluebirds and the little Scouts and so forth, being refreshed, and the importance of this... Every year we go through the same ritual.<sup>5</sup> If rituals aren't effective in teaching, you better tell me again because I think it is the most powerful way of teaching our young children the importance of a man with a gun. I now look at all other centers of towns. We're not the only one that adulates war; Lexington is not alone in that. We're all parts of this. I don't see us challenging patriotism very rapidly. This was indeed a challenge—almost—to patriotism, that what the government is doing is right. This was saying what the government is doing is *not* right. I think our most deeply imbedded “ism,” even deeper than racism maybe, is patriotism. It's the most destructive, potentially the most destructive.

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<sup>5</sup> The “ritual” is probably the celebration of Patriot's Day.

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INT: I think George Bush has been genuinely shocked that his indictment of Clinton did not fly. He was left quite baffled by the fact that his questioning Clinton's patriotism did not seal his reelection.

LL: Well, you're trying to do that with trust. Other people were aware of how much we've been able to trust Bush's word, even though it wasn't fed back. As I reflect on it, I think Clinton got elected without too much acrimony. He responded every time there was a charge and said something, but he didn't dwell on it. I hope we don't have that kind of thing playing itself out through this administration. I was needing Clinton to be elected, and I think a lot of us were. But, oh my gracious, when you look at what they've got ahead of them...

INT: As an outsider—and we're all outsiders—don't you take some inspiration from the fact that the outsiders did have an impact on a town that was supposed to be the birthplace of American liberty? It seems to me that it shows that we all have learned something in America that gave us the power to do these things as individuals, to believe that we could change something.

LL: Yes, a little a bit colored—or maybe quite a bit colored—[by] my experience at First Parish as a feminist. “Oh, here comes the women's libber.” Now if there was anything that was a put-down term, it was the term “women's libber.” Anything in a force for change, this really needs to be put down whenever, ridicule or whatever, as a vehicle. I haven't taken that much hope that what I've done in feminism—and I have done quite a bit in my denomination with feminism—that I guess after we're off I'll discuss a little bit more of what...of personal things...

END OF INTERVIEW