

IN STEP WITH:®

KAY LENZ

BY JAMES BRADY



WHEN SHE WAS just 19 and looked younger, Kay Lenz starred as a cute but sexy hippie in a movie called *Breezy*, opposite William Holden and directed by Clint Eastwood. I asked Kay how intimidating that had been for a kid.

"I called him [Holden] 'Bill,'" she recalled. "My God! And I was yelling, 'Hey, Clint!' I had so very little experience, I couldn't even hit the marks [where actors are supposed to stand and move], but what a kind guy William Holden was and what a very nice man Clint was. It was only the third film he directed, but he was already a No. 1 box-office star."

Two decades later, Kay is in the hit NBC series *Reasonable Doubts*, playing a defense attorney opposite Marlee Matlin and Mark Harmon. She didn't get the job on a platter. In 1991, she was only a guest star, appearing in nine episodes as the lawyer Maggie Zombro before signing on full-time this season. Being a guest star is tough, Kay says, because you're really auditioning each time, with no assurance that you'll be called back the next week. Now, even though she has two Emmy Awards and a bunch of nominations, she finally has a little job security. How important are Emmys to an actor?

"Pros don't consider them important," she said. "The first time I won, I thought it was the most glorious day of my life. The second time I won, I thought it was the most glorious day. Then I didn't work again for months."

Because *Reasonable Doubts* is an hour-long drama, there's no shortage of work now for Kay. "The hours certainly add up—12- and 15-hour days," she said. "But one of the great pleasures of this show is everyone seems open to listen. Now, I'm considered the expert on 'Maggie.' And as far as Marlee and Mark, we're now great friends and go around together and get along."

For five years, Kay was wed to the teen idol David Cassidy (she still has only good words to say about him), and she has never remarried. "No," Kay said, "no children. Maybe some day."

That rare breed, a native Californian, Kay was born in Van Nuys. "My

Born:

March 4, 1953, in Los Angeles.

Personal:

Married to David Cassidy, 1977-82.

Films:

Include *Breezy*, 1973; *American Graffiti*, 1973; *Fast-Walking*, 1982; *Falling From Grace*, 1992.

Television Series:

Guest role on *Midnight Caller*, 1988 (Emmy); extended guest role on *Reasonable Doubts*, 1991; *Reasonable Doubts*, 1992-

Television Miniseries:

Include *Rich Man, Poor Man*, 1976; *Rich Man, Poor Man, Book II*, 1977.

Television Movies:

Include *The Weekend Nun*, 1972; *Lisa, Bright and Dark*, 1973; *Heart in Hiding*, 1974 (Emmy); *Unwed Father*, 1974; *The FBI Story—The FBI vs. Alvin Karpis, Public Enemy Number One*, 1974; *Sanctuary of Fear*, 1979; *Prisoners of the Lost Universe*, 1983; *Murder by Night*, 1989; *How the West Was Won*, 1990.



Edith Adams

Brady's Bits

How Hollywood can you get? Kay drives a Mercedes and has a house in the hills near that famous sign that spells out "Hollywood." When Kay and I spoke, Southern California was going through one of its periodic monsoons, and I wondered if she worried that the house might one day be washed down the hill. "No," she said, "but I've got three leaks in the dining room, and I just had it done." As for play, Kay said, "I own a horse, and I ride. I've ridden my whole life. There was a choice once: Go to rodeo school or act. I acted." Kay has very pretty hair, and I asked her what color it was. She laughed. "Clairol calls it Golden Apricot."

Not every hit TV show is about women lawyers—it just seems that way. Kay Lenz talks about her role on *Reasonable Doubts*.

dad was a DJ in San Francisco, then an announcer in L.A.," she said. "My mother worked for CBS, but not as an actress—though she once was in a commercial." Kay's introduction to show-biz was on *The Andy Griffith Show*, at 13. I asked what she recalled, and Kay laughed. "You know what I remember?" she said. "The first time I met him, Andy said, 'Hello,' and he took off his sunglasses, and he had a black eye. He never explained how he got it, and I never asked."

In the film *Falling From Grace*, Kay drew raves playing opposite John Mellencamp and Mariel Hemingway. How did she and Mariel get on? "Great. She's so sweet. And we talked about how on TV we both play attorneys."