



BROOKLYN  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

**Brooklyn Historical Society**

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**For Immediate Release**

**February 26, 2008**

## **Oral History Panel Examines Questions of Memory and History at BHS**

### **WHAT:**

Panel Discussion:

***The Shape of Public and Private Memory:***

***How do individual memories contribute to historical understanding of complex events?***

In conjunction with the BHS oral history exhibit:

*In Our Own Words: Portraits of Brooklyn's Vietnam Veterans*

Please join oral historian **Michael Frisch**, Professor of History & American Studies at the University at Buffalo, SUNY and incoming president of the Oral History Association; **Kristin Ann Hass**, author of *Carried to the Wall: American Memory and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial*; and **Amy Starecheski**, lead interviewer on the *September 11, 2001 Narrative and Memory Project* as they discuss what we can learn from oral history collections in which people remember and discuss their experiences of complex and personally traumatic events, such as 9/11 and the Vietnam War. How can these collections be used and engaged by scholars, students, teachers, and other curious listeners? How do scholars find and wrestle with the "History" in collections of personal memories? And how can all of us experience and respond to these memories in ways that enrich our understanding of our individual and collective history and our world today?

### **WHEN:**

Thursday, March 13, 2008

7 – 9pm

*Free and Open to the Public*

### **WHERE:**

Brooklyn Historical Society

128 Pierrepont St.

Brooklyn, NY 11201

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### **WHO:**

#### PANELISTS:

**Michael Frisch** is Professor of History & American Studies/ Senior Research Scholar at the University at Buffalo, SUNY. He is an American social and urban historian who has been involved for many years in oral and public history projects, often in collaboration with community history organizations, museums, and documentary filmmakers. Frisch is the author of *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History* (1990) and *Portraits in Steel* (1993), in collaboration with the noted documentary photographer **Milton Rogovin**, which received the OHA's Best Book prize for 1993-1995. He has served as editor of the *Oral History Review* (1986-1996) and President of the American Studies Association (2000-2001), and will be President of the Oral History Association in 2009-2010. His recent work in oral history applications of new media technology, developed through his consulting office, The Randforce Associates, LLC, based in the University at Buffalo's Technology Incubator, informs a major recent publication, "Oral History and the Digital Revolution: Towards a Post-Documentary Sensibility," in Perks and Thomson, *The Oral History Reader*, Second Edition (Routledge, 2006).

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**Kristin Ann Hass** is an Assistant Professor in the Program in American Culture at the University of Michigan. Her first book *Carried to the Wall: American Memory and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial* is an exploration of public memorial practices, the place of the soldier in the culture, and the legacies of the Vietnam War. She is currently at work on *Sacrificing Soldiers: War Memorials on the National Mall Since 1979*. She lectures, teaches, and writes about nationalism, memory, publics, citizen soldiers, and memorialization. She holds a Ph.D. in American Studies, has worked in a number of historical museums, including the National Museum of American History, The Henry Ford, and the Michigan Historical Museums.

**Amy Starecheski** is the Lead Interviewer and Director of Research for the Atlantic Philanthropies Oral History Project at the Columbia University Oral History Research Office. She was a lead interviewer on the September 11, 2001 Narrative and Memory Project, for which she interviewed Afghans, Muslims, Sikhs, activists, low-income people, and the unemployed. Ms. Starecheski was part of the team that designed and implemented the Telling Lives Project, exploring the uses of oral history beyond the archive, and the Response and Recovery Project, interviewing professionals who responded to the crisis of 9/11. She spent 2002-2005 developing curriculum and teaching oral history in New York City's public schools, as well as training teachers and museum staff in oral history methodology, and is co-author of the *Telling Lives Oral History Curriculum Guide*. She studied anthropology at Columbia College and holds a Master's degree in education from Columbia University Teachers College.

***In Our Own Words*** is made possible by the Nathan Cummings Foundation, Astoria Federal Savings, HBO and is in partnership with Brooklyn College. The Shape of Public and Private Memory is supported by Independence Community Foundation and the Booth Ferris Foundation.

*The mission of the Brooklyn Historical Society is to connect the past to the present and make the vibrant history of Brooklyn tangible, relevant, and meaningful for today's diverse communities, and for generations to come. Founded in 1863, BHS functions as a library, museum and urban education center dedicated to the people of Brooklyn, providing opportunities for civic dialogue and thoughtful engagement.*

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