



**American History Workshop**  
588 Seventh Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11212-3707

*Telephone: (718) 499-6500*

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**The American History Workshop** produces public programs to connect Americans with their past. Among our clients are museums, historical societies, historic districts, parks and gardens, filmmakers, public agencies, businesses, citizens' groups, television stations, and others involved in interpreting history.

We produce: full development plans for young or growing museums; collections management and public programs evaluations; scripts,

design and technical production of multi-media presentations; interpretive exhibits and educational programs; evaluations of public programs; guide books, catalogues, local histories and other publications; and historical research reports in American politics and society, business and labor, families and communities, ethnic groups, cities and regions, and the development of art and architecture.

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### **Point of View**

The interpretive arts — story-telling, theater, exhibitry — connect people to ideas and images that enrich their lives. When the subject matter is historical, interpretation ought to let people understand that the traditions of space, time, objects, and social processes are alive in their own minds. History isn't told so that minds can be furnished with the places, names and dates of battles; it is told so that we can learn how modern life is rooted in the past. The history we tell is an honest one, unvarnished by boosterism or by nostalgia for a doubtfully golden age. We strive to locate and depict the human issues — the passions and the actions — of each generation of Americans that speak most forcefully to our own age. We especially want to recover the forgotten voices in the American past, and to show that life in the most ordinary circumstances and the most local places can be connected to the larger stories of the American people.

### **The Work Process**

We are often called when an organization has seen the possibility for growth, or when it wants to connect itself more strongly to its community of visitors, viewers, or supporters. Moments

like these are important occasions in the histories of organizations, and they often result in innovative work, new methods of inquiry, and new modes of interpretation.

We begin each project by assembling members of our staff, scholars, and technical consultants whose skills and experience particularly qualify us to understand the challenges of the work. The client's own leadership is essential to the collaborative process — we do not wish to duplicate skills the institution already has, but rather to form a capable task force to define problems and solutions, and shape programs that can be funded, built, and maintained within the resources of the institution.

**American History Workshop** projects always include a plan for proceeding — if the scope of our collaborative work does not include day-to-day involvement to the completion of the program, we leave the organization with a clear idea of what it can do the next week, and the next month, to make the vision real.



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**Richard Rabinowitz**  
*President*

RICHARD RABINOWITZ is one of the leading public historians in the United States, with over 45 years of experience in creating new museums and exhibitions on every aspect of American history and culture.

As founder and president since 1980 of **American History Workshop**, Dr. Rabinowitz has led the creative work of scholars, curators, educators, artists, architects, designers, and institutional planners in fashioning over 500 successful and innovative history programs at sites like the New-York Historical Society, the Lower East Side Tenement Museum in New York; the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute; the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati; and state heritage parks and local and regional historical societies in 33 states and the District of Columbia.

He has organized exhibitions and media presentations on immigration and ethnic community histories in Seattle, Tucson, and Wheeling; on urban and suburban development in Boston, Phoenix, Portland, Chicago, and Albany; on legal and constitutional history in Philadelphia; on the encounter of natives and newcomers in Ogallala and Spokane; and on American popular culture in Orlando and New York; among many others. In this work, he has been responsible for researching and arranging the loans of thousands of important historical and art objects, images, and documents; for conceptualizing and overseeing the production of dozens of exhibitions; and for writing award-winning exhibition texts, labels, and scripts for media pieces containing both narrative voice-overs and reconstructions of period historical voices.

From 2004 to 2011, Dr. Rabinowitz served as senior project historian for the New-York Historical Society. In 2005-09, he curated and wrote the path breaking blockbuster exhibitions at N-YHS on Slavery in New York, *New York Divided: Slavery and the Civil War*, *French Founding Father: Lafayette Returns to Washington's America*, *Grant and Lee* (co-curator), and *Lincoln and New York*. He has recently completed work on a major international traveling exhibition on **Revolution! The Atlantic World Reborn**. The exhibition interprets the interrelated upheavals in the 18th-century Atlantic world that invented our modern notions of universal human rights, anti-slavery, political equality, and the independent nation-state. After its run at N-YHS in 2011-12, *Revolution!* is being redesigned to travel to museums in France, Great Britain, Haiti, and the United States. Dr. Rabinowitz co-edited the exhibition catalogue and contributed an essay to that volume.

In addition, Dr. Rabinowitz has also recently completed the content and interpretive development of the "Slavery and Freedom" gallery at the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture, to be built on the mall in Washington in 2015.

A scholar of American social and religious history, Dr. Rabinowitz has taught at Harvard, Skidmore, and Scripps colleges. His book, *The Spiritual Self in Everyday Life: The Transformation of Personal Religious Experience in Nineteenth-Century New England* (Northeastern University Press, 1989), has been recognized as a "subtle and thoughtful analysis of what it has meant to be religious



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in America." He has also written historical books and articles for children and for museum professionals. He is currently writing a book on the evolution of public history since the 1960s, to be published by the University of North Carolina Press.

### **Biographical**

He began his professional career, from 1967 to 1975, at Old Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts, where he led the development of an innovative hands-on learning program that has had enormous influence in the museum education field. From 1977 to 1980 he served as a special assistant to the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities on policy and program development.

Dr. Rabinowitz has been active in professional service. For five years, he initiated and directed the New York Institute for Public History Interpretation, a two-week-long seminar on interpretive philosophies and methods for mid-career professionals. He has served on numerous boards and advisory committees and on the editorial boards of *The American Quarterly* and *The Public Historian*. He is chairman of the program committee of the board of the Museum at the Eldridge Street Synagogue in New York City. He co-chaired the Working Group on Slavery and Public History at the Gilder Lehrman Center [GLC] for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition at Yale. He is currently a Visiting Fellow and Research Scholar at the GLC, and directs its annual Public History Institute, bringing together museum professionals and scholars engaged in interpreting African American history.

He has won awards in museum and exhibit planning from the American Association for State and Local History, the New York City Landmarks Conservancy, the Civil War Roundtable of New York City, and the Victorian Society of New York; for film and multi-image work from the New York Association for Multi-Image and the International Film & TV Festival of New York; for educational media from the Houston International Film Festival; for historical scholarship from the American Society of Church History, the Danforth Foundation, and many others; and for historic preservation work from the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society and the New York Landmarks Conservancy. His article, "Eavesdropping at the Well: Interpretive Media in the Slavery in New York Exhibition," in *The Public Historian* (summer 2013), has been awarded the G. Wesley Johnson Award of the National Council on Public History for 2013.

He was elected a Member of the American Antiquarian Society in 2003, and to the Council of the Society in 2010. Dr. Rabinowitz was awarded the 2012 Herbert Feis Award by the American Historical Association for his distinguished contributions to public history.

### **Education**

A.B., *summa cum laude*, Harvard College, 1966. Ph.D., History of American Civilization, Harvard University, 1977.



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**Lynda B. Kaplan**  
*Media Director / Planner*

LYNDA B. KAPLAN is a media producer and exhibition planner with a special interest in bringing narratives to life. As a documentary film and video producer and director, she has successfully organized corporate communication campaigns, produced fund-raising films, and managed the research and writing for news and information programming. Her organizational ability, creative vision, and practiced communication skills enable Ms. Kaplan to get to the heart of an issue quickly and effectively. As an exhibition planner she has worked in collaboration with teams of designers and interpretive researchers to tell stories that engage and expand public understanding of historic issues, art, and cultural transformation.

Ms. Kaplan has been a principal at American History Workshop for over twenty years. Most recently she was curatorial director, project manager, and media producer for several path-breaking exhibitions at the New-York Historical Society. The first two, *Slavery in New York* and *New York Divided: Slavery and the Civil War* (2005-7), explored the deep connections of slavery with the economy, politics, and culture of New York. *French Founding Father: Lafayette's Return to Washington's America* (2008) and *Lincoln and New York* (2009) broke new ground in linking familiar subjects to the evolution of New York City and American politics. For the 2011 exhibition, *Revolution! The Atlantic World Reborn*, Ms. Kaplan gathered over 300 rare and important artifacts from 73 repositories in eighteen countries to help recount the upheavals in the United States, Britain, France, and Haiti that shaped the modern dream of universal human rights. In her work with interpretive media on these exhibits, Ms. Kaplan promoted the use of audio installations as a critical element in the storytelling.

Other projects for AHW have included media plans for the Arizona Historical Society in Tempe; video projects for the Constitution Works program at Federal Hall in New York City; a new exhibition for Chesterwood, the home and studio of New York sculptor Daniel Chester French; and many others. As project manager, Ms. Kaplan fashioned an interpretive exhibition for the NYC Parks Council, *People Make Parks*, at the Municipal Art Society. She led the production of permanent exhibits and audio tours for the award-winning Luce Center for the Study of American Culture at the New-York Historical Society. Ms. Kaplan also did extensive oral history interviews for AHW projects at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum and both video production and archival research for the War For Freedom web-based project for Civil War battlefield parks of the National Park Service.

Ms. Kaplan was the project director for AHW's prototype digital history project, *Telling Lives*. The model software and hardware was installed at N-YHS over five years and has collected over 10,000 video responses to AHW's exhibitions.



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### **Biographical**

Ms. Kaplan worked for several years in theatrical management before she began her career in film and video. She was an associate producer for two Emmy award-winning programs at WCBS-TV. She also worked at ABC's Good Morning America both as a researcher and field producer. Her film work in the corporate world includes film projects for *The Wall Street Journal*, *International Paper Company*, *the Girl Scouts of America*, *Metropolitan Life Insurance Company* and *Ogilvy & Mather Advertising*, among others. Before joining American History Workshop, Ms. Kaplan was a researcher for several PBS programs and served as Producer / Director for Adam Smith's Money World on PBS.

### **Education**

B.A., Speech and Theater, University of Illinois





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## **Selected Projects, 1980 – 2014**

### **Interpretive and Operational Plans**

James J. Hill House, Minnesota Historical Society, 1980-81

Fall River (MA) State Heritage Park, 1980-81

Piscataqua Regional Interpretive Project (NH, ME), Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, 1980-81

Higgins Armory Museum, Worcester (MA), 1982-84

American Museum of the Moving Image, NYC, 1982-85

Massachusetts State Archives Museum, Boston, 1983-85

National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, 1983

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, 1983

Mütter Museum, Philadelphia, 1984-86

Albany (NY) Urban Cultural Park, 1985-87

Lower East Side Tenement Museum, NYC, 1987-98

Birmingham (AL) Civil Rights Institute, 1987

Ropewalk Museum, Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, Boston, 1988-89

Arizona Historical Society, Tempe, 1989-96

Arnold Arboretum, Boston, 1991-94

Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture, Spokane, WA, 1992-93

Allegheny Ridge State Heritage Park, PA, 1993-94

Orange County Historical Society, Orlando, FL, 1993-95

Wheeling (WV) National Heritage Area, 1993-94



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***Interpretive and Operational Plans cont.***

Gardens in Human Culture, New York Botanic Garden, 1994-95

National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, Cincinnati, 1995-2000

New-York Historical Society, Luce Center for the Study of American Culture, 1998-2000

International Museum of African American History, Charleston, SC, 2000-03

**Urban Design and Outdoor Interpretive Elements**

NYC Harbor Park, 1985

Historic St. Mary's City, MD, 1993

Illinois and Michigan Canal Corridor, Chicago, 1997-99

Origins Park, Chicago, 1999

Boston Wharf District Park, North End Parks, Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston, 2004-05

**Historical Exhibitions and Multi-Media Presentations**

*"12 Elm Street"* Orientation Program, National Museum of American History, Washington, 1980-82

*"The South Street Experience,"* South Street Seaport Museum, 1982-83

*"Family Album,"* Broome County (NY) Immigration History Project, 1982-83

*"The Rim of Empire,"* Colonial Monterey (CA), 1984

*"Miracle at Philadelphia,"* The Bicentennial Exhibition on the US Federal Constitutional Convention, Independence National Historical Park, 1984-86

*"Providence Visionaries,"* Providence, RI, 1985-86

*"Breaking Traditions: Portland,"* Oregon Historical Society, 1994

*"Salmon Stakes,"* Seattle Museum of History and Industry, 1995



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*Historical Exhibitions and Multi-Media Presentations cont.*

*"Slavery and Freedom"* core exhibition, National Museum of African American History and Culture, 2010-2011

**In 2005-11, AHW curated, wrote, and produced the following exhibitions for the New-York Historical Society**

*"Slavery in New York"*

*"New York Divided: Slavery and the Civil War"*

*"French Founding Father: Lafayette Returns to Washington's America"*

*"Grant and Lee " (co-curator)*

*"Lincoln and New York"*

*"Revolution! The Atlantic World Reborn"*