

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Puja Sangar

Tel: 650.724.4211

Fax: 650.736.1784

puja.sangar@stanford.edu

Off Mike
A Memoir of Talk Radio and Literary Life
Michael Krasny
(Stanford University Press, October 2007)

"Krasny canonizes his talk radio career in this memoir, placing stories from his juicy backlog of interviews alongside tales of a neglectful father, his Ohio State fraternity, procreating and purchasing a home. His steadily honed love of language is palpable and infectious, suited more to the book party-hopping literary junkie than the broadcast historian. Eminent newsmakers, literary greats and iconoclasts open up to him like patients on a psychiatrist's couch..."

— *Publishers Weekly*

How do you keep an audience of radio listeners engaged in a 60 minute conversation on a wide array of issues, from the Middle East to the latest ballot proposition, from global warming to organic farming, from Picasso to Asian Art, and the latest book by Joyce Carol Oates? In *Off Mike: A Memoir of Talk Radio and Literary Life* (available from Stanford University Press) Michael Krasny describes his experiences as host of *Forum*—the popular KQED show with a reputation for interviewing the country's leading literary figures, intellectuals, and policymakers.

In a mix of memoir and reportage, Krasny takes readers inside his world—telling of his coming of age during the heady 1960s and vividly describing his journey from a life as a student of literature to that of a struggling novelist, an educator, and—somewhat accidentally—a radio host. Krasny recounts the polarizing transformation of talk radio,

comparing his early days at KGO commercial radio to his current role at National Public Radio. In the face of sensational, partisan, and feel-good talk radio, Krasny manages to keep the flow of talk in his San Francisco based show – animated and intellectually compelling – making *Forum* one of the most popular NPR shows among young urban listeners today.

Whether Krasny is asking Joyce Carol Oates what fires her imagination, examining with Ian McEwan why Saul Bellow is wildly popular among British novelists, considering Tony Kushner’s remark that it is harder being gay than Jewish, or discussing with Umberto Eco why he loves comic books – he is witty, amusing, and often politically charged. Brought together in *Off Mike*, the vignettes and commentary in this book cast a provocative lens on our times. The book includes vignettes from 47 interviews, including Umberto Eco, Amy Tan, Alice Walker, Art Spiegelman, Tom Stoppard, Ian McEwan and Joan Didion.

About the Author

Michael Krasny is the host and senior editor of Northern California’s NPR affiliate KQED’s award-winning Forum program, a news and public affairs radio program that also concentrates on current events, culture, health, business and technology, the arts and entertainment. Dr. Krasny is Professor of English at San Francisco State University.

Stanford General Books
An Imprint of Stanford University Press

October 2007
344 pages; 16 Illustrations

Cloth Edition \$24.95 978-0-8047-5671-6

For media inquiries, please contact Puja Sangar at 650.724.4211 or puja.sangar@stanford.edu.

#