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THE SMITHSONIAN – *ENOLA GAY* CONTROVERSY: INCLUDING WISCONSIN  
PERSPECTIVES ON THE EXHIBIT AND THE ATOMIC BOMBINGS

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EAU CLAIRE, WI

8 MAY 2008

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**Abstract**

This paper examines the Smithsonian – *Enola Gay* controversy, an event which took place between 1993 and 1995. The controversy had broad implications for the field of history and the arena of American public consciousness. In an attempt to portray the end of World War II, the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the nuclear arms race, the National Air and Space Museum ran into great opposition from various military groups and certain members of Congress. Each of these groups supported their own agendas; however, they all centered their arguments on what they say as a lack of balance in the Smithsonian exhibit. Scholars have noted, however, that the real issue at stake was a difference in the way America's role in history was viewed. The Smithsonian wished to portray an accurate picture, even at the cost of exposing America's not so innocent past. The events sparked conversation about the atomic bombings and around the United States people discussed the events. In Wisconsin, there was lively debate and discussion.

## **Timeline of Events<sup>1</sup>**

March 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, 1945: The United States conducts the firebombing of Tokyo

April 18<sup>th</sup>, 1945: Joint Intelligence Committee of the Joint Chiefs of Staff praises the air and sea blockade of Japan

July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1945: Truman writes in his diary that the Japanese will be finished when the Russians enter the war.

August 6<sup>th</sup>, 1945: The United States drops the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima

August 8<sup>th</sup>, 1945: The Soviet Union declares war on Japan

August 9<sup>th</sup>, 1945: The United States drops the second atomic bomb on Nagasaki

1946: A U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey concludes that Japan would have likely surrendered without the atomic bombings, the Russian declaration of war, or a land invasion

1947: Former secretary of War, Henry Stimson, publishes articles in *Harper's* defending the attacks.

1950: Admiral Leahy, chief of staff to President Roosevelt, publishes his memos and notes commenting that it was unnecessary to use atomic weapons on Japan, because they were ready to surrender anyway.

1964: U.S. involvement in Vietnam escalates with the Gulf of Tonkin Incident.

1965: Gar Alperovitz's book *Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam* is published. The book was critical of the decisions to bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki and benefited from Henry Stimson's diary, which had recently been released. Alperovitz also used evidence that the bombs were used to display power to the Soviet Union.

1976: Barton Bernstein publishes *The Atomic Bomb: The Critical Issues*. The book uses evidence that the projected casualties for an American land invasion of Japan were lower than commonly believed.

1987: The Smithsonian National Museum of American History displays the exhibit "A More Perfect Union: Japanese Americans and the United States Constitution," which deals with American-Japanese internment camps.

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<sup>1</sup> Two very helpful timelines which assisted my own research included Edward J. Gallagher, "The Enola Gay Controversy," Digital Library, LeHigh University, <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/> and William Lanouette, "Reason and Circumstances of the Hiroshima Bomb," [http://www.hiroshimacommittee.org/Background\\_ReasonAndCircumstance.htm](http://www.hiroshimacommittee.org/Background_ReasonAndCircumstance.htm) In addition to material from these sources, I added some events that happened during and after the bombings which I felt would be useful for the reader in understanding some basic issues about the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

1987: Martin Harwit becomes director of the National Air and Space Museum

1988: In response to various letters to either display or not display the *Enola Gay*, Harwit writes that the plane will be displayed in the near future, and would be done so in the context of strategic bombing.

1989: The Smithsonian begins to have exhibits and talks about strategic bombing, in order to establish the context for displaying the *Enola Gay*.

1990: The Smithsonian encounters budget problems and their budget is reduced by \$2.2 million. Some express dissatisfaction with the way the Smithsonian presented their exhibit on strategic bombing and question how the *Enola Gay* will be displayed.

November 1991: The Smithsonian displays “Legend, Memory and the Great War in the Air,” an upfront look at the horrors of World War I aviation.

June & July 1993: The National Air and Space Museum releases planning documents for the upcoming exhibit which will feature the *Enola Gay*. The title is tentatively “The Crossroads: The End of World War II, the Atomic Bomb, and the Onset of the Cold War.”

August 1993: Burr Bennett with the American Legion submits a petition to the NASM to have the *Enola Gay* displayed proudly.

September 1993: Air Force Association Executive Director Monroe Hatch writes a letter to NASM director Martin Harwit, expressing his concern that the proposed exhibit lacks balance. Various meetings between the two organizations take place after this to discuss the issue of balance.

January 1994: The NASM releases the first draft script of the proposed exhibit and sends a copy to the Air Force Association

February 1994: *Air Force Magazine* writer John Correll publishes an article in response the Smithsonian’s first draft script. This is followed shortly by a press release from the AFA, criticizing the museum.

March 28<sup>th</sup>, 1994: The *Washington Times* publishes one of the first articles relating directly to the controversy. They quote the AFA but do not give the opinions of the Smithsonian curators.

March 30<sup>th</sup>, 1994: Senator Nancy Kassenbaum writes to Smithsonian Secretary Adams, expressing her displeasure with the exhibit, citing that veterans will find it objectionable.

May 4<sup>th</sup>, 1994: The American Legion begins to actively protest the Smithsonian’s *Enola Gay* exhibit.

May 31<sup>st</sup>, 1994: In response to Air Force Association (AFA) criticism and after much review, the NASM releases a second draft for the proposed exhibit. The new title is “The Last Act: The Atomic bomb and the End of World War II.”

June 1994: Harwit writes *Enola Gay* pilot Paul Tibbits, asking him to provide comments in a video for the exhibit. The AFA is still unhappy with exhibit and the changes that have been made.

July 1994: “Dropping the bomb” an article in the *Washington Post* is critical of the Smithsonian.

August 1994: Congressman Peter Blute and other members of Congress express their concern and disappointment with the Smithsonian; most of their arguments reflected their idea that the exhibit did not do enough to honor America.

August 1994: The NASM adds a section titled “War in the Pacific” to the exhibit in response to critics who argued that the exhibit didn’t establish the prior ruthlessness of the Japanese army in the War.

September 1994: The Smithsonian begins direct talks with the American Legion on how to make changes to the exhibit. The Senate passes Resolution 257, a nonbinding resolution, against the proposed exhibit.

October 1994: Organization of American Historians and others write in defense of the Smithsonian and argue against political interference in the exhibit. The AFA pushes against the “Ground Zero” section of the exhibit.

October 26, 1994: The NASM finishes its final draft of the exhibit, titled “The Last Act.”

December 1994: Senators call for Harwit’s resignation.

January 1995: The Historians Committee for Open Debate on Hiroshima is formed. The American Legion and the AFA call for the exhibit to be cancelled; their opposition is intensified over the debate of estimated American casualties in a land invasion of Kyushu. Congress calls for Harwit’s resignation.

January 30<sup>th</sup>, 1995: The exhibit is cancelled. Following the cancellation, historians and others debated the consequences of the cancellation; one example of this was the discussion which took place in the magazine *Diplomatic History*.

May 1995: Harwit resigns as Director of the National Air and Space Museum.

June 1995: The Smithsonian opens a new, redone exhibit on the *Enola Gay* and the end of World War II.

July 1995: Peter Jennings, an ABC television reporter, does a special on the end of World War II. He sympathizes with the Smithsonian's original exhibit, thereby generating his own criticism. The Historians Committee for Open Debate on Hiroshima attacks the new exhibit, referring to it as censored history.

August 1995: *Judgment at the Smithsonian* by Philip Nobile is published. The book contains the entire first draft of the *Enola Gay* exhibit with comments from Nobile and Barton Bernstein.

December 1995: *The Journal of American History* publishes articles relating the larger consequences of the *Enola Gay* controversy.

1996: Martin Harwit publishes his interpretation of events surrounding the controversy in *An Exhibit Denied: Lobbying the History of the Enola Gay*.

2003: The Smithsonian opens a new hanger which will be a permanent home for the *Enola Gay*, located at Dulles Airport. The opening of the building is greeted with mixed reaction: both protests and support. The Committee for a National Discussion of Nuclear History and Current Policy expresses its concern that the *Enola Gay* is being displayed only as a "magnificent technological achievement."



## **Introduction**

In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, few single events shaped public policy and affected the fate of humanity more than the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. During World War II the American leaders who knew of the bombs existence debated its use. Many believed that the bombs would never actually be used and some top American officials felt that Japan was near defeat. Yet, the United States did use two atomic weapons against Japan at the end of the war. Throughout the post-war years, historians and scholars have struggled to find new meaning and insight about the reasons for their use. As new research became available scholars attempted to share their findings with the general public.

In the early 1990s the Smithsonian Institute planned an exhibit with the intent of informing visitors about the atomic bombings and challenging them to consider the events in light of the most recent research. Although well intended and well researched, the original exhibit was never shown to the public. Instead it was halted after the museum gave into pressure from various military groups and Congress. The reasons behind this lay in a fundamental difference with how history should be viewed. The *Enola Gay* exhibit was only a piece of this larger puzzle, the puzzle of the ownership of history.

The goal of this paper is to examine what became known as the *Enola Gay* controversy. After providing an assessment and analysis of the events, the paper will move on to describe how people in Wisconsin felt about the exhibit. Newspapers and media around the U.S. were important by, not just reporting, but actually helping shape events of the controversy. Because of the major attention it received, the controversy also helped stir discussion and debate around the U.S. Wisconsin was no exception to this and editorials in Wisconsin newspapers provided

interesting insight into public opinion, not just about the Smithsonian exhibit, but about the atomic bombings and World War II as well.

Regardless of location, the heart of the controversy lay with the decision to use the atomic bombs and the light in which they were portrayed. In their book *History Wars: The Enola Gay and other Battles for the American Past* editors Edward Linenthal and Tom Engelhardt mentioned that, in the traditional, “heroic” view of the American role in World War II, it was incomprehensible to portray Americans as victimizers.<sup>2</sup> By showing pictures from ground zero in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Smithsonian was reiterating just that, that America’s role in World War II was not so innocent.

It is also important to note that there were actually three controversies that resulted from this exhibit. The first was the controversy which the Smithsonian originally identified, the controversial use of atomic weapons in WWII. The second controversy arose when various military related groups lodged protest against what they saw as an exhibit that lacked balance and contained information which they found objectionable. The final controversy arose after the Smithsonian removed many of the “objectionable” items and largely scaled down the exhibit, creating one which was devoid of any historical context. Many historians around the United States and Japan criticized the Smithsonian for this and claimed it was censorship of history.

At the same time the Smithsonian-*Enola Gay* controversy was unfolding, larger arguments were happening around the country; the field of history was being shaken up by the National Standards for United States history. Historians from around the country collaborated on

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<sup>2</sup> More information on the “heroic” view of American history is included later in the paper. However, the use of the term comes from John W. Dower, “Three Narratives of Our Humanity,” in Edward T. Linenthal and Tom Engelhardt, eds., *History War: The Enola Gay and Other Battles for the American Past* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1996), 80.

this attempt to create standards for the way history was taught at the K-12 level. The project was commissioned by the Department of Education and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The standards attempted to teach American and World history with a broader focus. This included recognizing minority and other previously discredited peoples who had been left out of the standard textbooks. They also encouraged students to take more of a participatory role in history learning, be it through debates, discussions, or role plays. Gloria Sesso, a high school teacher from Dix Hills, Long Island and a contributor to the national history standards offered her view, "...American values are reinforced with the ability to choose and think. That's what freedom is about, making choices."<sup>3</sup>

In regards to the atomic bombing of Japan the standards did not contain any overt messages that the United States was wrong in its decision. Rather it simply asked questions of students in an attempt to help them think critically of history. One standard stated that students should be able to examine the consequences of World War II being total warfare. A recommendation along with this encouraged students to look at the book *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*, a story of a young Japanese girl who developed cancer after being exposed to radiation from the atomic bombings as a baby.<sup>4</sup>

Some conservative members of Congress, and especially Lynne Cheney, chairwoman of the National Endowment for the Humanities were opposed to the standards which historians drafted. They termed the standards "politically correct" and instead favored a more "affirmative

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<sup>3</sup> Jo Thomas, "History on the March; New Standards, Attacked on the Right, Stress the Neglected," *New York Times*, 5 April 1995, 1(B).

<sup>4</sup> Gary Nash, Charlotte Crabtree and Ross E. Dunn, *History on Trial: Culture Wars and the Teaching of the Past* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997), 243.

tone” of American history.<sup>5</sup> The Smithsonian’s critics would use similar terminology when they attacked the *Enola Gay* exhibit.

The history standards, like the *Enola Gay* controversy, attracted a great amount of media attention which was both positive and negative. In any case, the media helped propel the debate concerning the standards, one consequence of which was that many Americans were compelled to do their own research on the issues.<sup>6</sup>

As with the *Enola Gay* controversy, Congress was also involved in the debate over the national history standards. In a move which seemed to be the predecessor for a similar vote over the Smithsonian’s exhibit, Congress at one point passed a bill which removed funding for the history standards and specified their own objectives for how American history should be taught.<sup>7</sup> A difference, however, between the debate over the National History Standards and the Smithsonian – *Enola Gay* controversy was that, whereas some national history standards textbooks were adopted in schools, the public never had the opportunity to see the original *Enola Gay* exhibit which was drastically redone by the time it opened.

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<sup>5</sup> Jo Thomas, “History on the March; New Standards, Attacked on the Right, Stress the Neglected,” *New York Times*, 5 April 1995, 1(B).

<sup>6</sup> Gary Nash, Charlotte Crabtree and Ross E. Dunn, *History on Trial: Culture Wars and the Teaching of the Past*, 194.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* 232-235.

### **Issues in Hiroshima and Nagasaki Historical Research**

One year after the war's end, a 1946 U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey concluded, "Certainly prior to 31 December 1945, and in all probability prior to 1 November 1945, Japan would have surrendered, even if Russia had not entered the war, and even if no invasion had been planned or contemplated."<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, Admiral Leahy, a 5-star admiral and chief of staff to Roosevelt during the War published his memos in 1950, which demonstrated his criticism of the bombs use. Most importantly, he wrote that the bombs were "...of no material assistance in our war against Japan. The Japanese were already defeated and ready to surrender."<sup>9</sup>

Despite the fact that many top ranking leaders disapproved of the bombs use, many Americans committed to a different viewpoint. This was that the atomic bombs saved hundreds of thousands of American lives which would have occurred in the instance of a land invasion of Japan. In his speech following the atomic bombing, President Truman referred to Hiroshima as an "important Japanese Army base," a misconception which solidified the justification of the bombings for many Americans.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, articles published in *Harper's* in 1947 under the name of Secretary of War Henry Stimson, also expressed support and justification for the bombings.

So from early on Americans were confronted with differing viewpoints of the events surrounding Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Over time, though, researchers were able to access new sources including President Truman and Secretary Stimson's diaries. These and other sources led historians to conclude that a future Cold War with the Soviet Union played a larger role in influencing American officials to use the atomic bombs than was previously thought.

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<sup>8</sup> As cited in The Curators at the National Air and Space Museum in Philip Nobile, ed. With an afterword by Barton J. Bernstein, *Judgment at the Smithsonian* (New York: Marlowe & Company, 1995), 49

<sup>9</sup> As cited in Gar Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 3.

<sup>10</sup> William Lanouette, "Reason and Circumstances of the Hiroshima Bomb," [http://www.hiroshimacommittee.org/Background\\_ReasonAndCircumstance.htm](http://www.hiroshimacommittee.org/Background_ReasonAndCircumstance.htm) (accessed 29 April 2008).

Additionally, researchers such as Barton Bernstein discovered that the projected estimates for American casualties in a land invasion of Japan were much lower than the commonly held belief; eventually the number which some cited as 200,000 to 1 million was actually found to have been 63,000.<sup>11</sup> The Smithsonian benefited from this previous research as curators created the *Enola Gay* exhibit.

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<sup>11</sup> From Admiral Leahy's diary as cited in Martin Harwit to Hubert R. Dagley, 9 January 1994, Digital Library, Lehigh University <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/r1/1994/> (accessed 29 April 2008).

### **Smithsonian Exhibits Prior to the Enola Gay**

The Smithsonian displayed several exhibits prior *Enola Gay* exhibit which were more critical and less celebratory of American history than past exhibits. Although they did not provoke as much criticism as the *Enola Gay* exhibit, the Smithsonian's critics used them as examples of what they saw as political correctness and revisionism. In 1987, for example, the Smithsonian National Museum of American History displayed "A More Perfect Union: Japanese Americans and the United States Constitution," which dealt with Japanese-American internment camps during World War II.

In 1991, the museum opened the exhibit "Seeds of Change: A Quincentennial Commemoration," in preparation for the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Columbus's voyage. The exhibit challenged the view of Europeans as "discoverers" by emphasizing the interactions, trade, and exchanges that took place between groups of people.<sup>12</sup> Then, with "The West as America: Rinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820-1920," the museum presented alternative viewpoints to the traditional idea of the American frontier.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> For more information on this see Gary Nash, Charlotte Crabtree and Ross E. Dunn, *History on Trial: Culture Wars and the Teaching of the Past* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997), 123.

<sup>13</sup> John W. Dower, "Three Narratives of Our Humanity," in Edward T. Linenthal and Tom Engelhardt, eds., *History War: The Enola Gay and Other Battles for the American Past* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1996), 75.

## **Goals for the Exhibit**

The creators of the National Air and Space Museum exhibit came from different backgrounds and areas of expertise. National Air and Space Museum director Martin Harwit came from Czechoslovakia where he had experienced the horrors of World War II and seen family members sent to concentration camps. Later in his life he monitored nuclear tests in the Pacific. His unique experiences with nuclear weapons lent credibility to the exhibit.<sup>14</sup>

Admiral Noel Gayler, who had been commander in chief of the Pacific Command, was another committee member, along with Mike Mansfield, former ambassador to Japan. Other members included Edwin Bearss, former chief historian of the National Park service, and Akira Iriye, a Harvard historian. The Smithsonian had a wide range of historians working on the project. The committee and curators originally titled the exhibit “The Crossroads: The End of World War II, the Atomic Bomb, and the Origins of the Cold War.” However, possibly due to pressure from critics, the title was later changed to “The Last Act: The Atomic Bomb and the End of World War II.”

In 1993 the museum presented goals for the exhibit in three planning proposals; these were released to the public as well as other groups. The primary goal changed little from the first proposal to the third. The goal was to

...encourage visitors to undertake a thoughtful and balanced re-examination of these events in the light of the political and military factors leading to the decision to drop the bomb, the human suffering experienced by the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the long-term implications of the events of August 6 and 9, 1945.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Edward T. Linenthal, “Anatomy of a Controversy,” in Edward T. Linenthal and Tom Engelhardt, eds., *History War: The Enola Gay and Other Battles for the American Past*, 15.

<sup>15</sup> National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution. Exhibition Planning Document. “The Crossroads: The End of World War II, the Atomic Bomb, and the Onset of the Cold War.” (July 1993), <http://www.afa.org/media/enolagay/07-93.html> (accessed 7 January 2008).



Another goal was to, "...contribute to a more profound discussion of the atomic bombings among the general public of the United States, Japan and elsewhere." The proposal ended with a comment on the broader theme of the exhibit which reflected the Smithsonian organizers' hopes for the exhibit; the exhibit "...will embody one common wish: that nuclear weapons never be used in anger again."<sup>16</sup>

The planning proposals also described the various sources and artifacts which would enhance the legitimacy of the exhibit. These were to have come in the form of leaflets, photos, bomb damaged artifacts, photos of victims, magazines, posters, artifacts of government propaganda, testimonies from soldiers, testimonies from bomb victims, letters, diaries, and statements from political leaders.<sup>17</sup>

A very important artifact in the Smithsonian exhibit would be the nose and fuselage of the *Enola Gay*, the B-29 bomber which dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Since this would be the first public showing of the *Enola Gay*, it attracted attention from veterans, the press, and other members of the public. This would be displayed along with personal items and photos from the 509<sup>th</sup> Composite Group which was in charge of dropping the bomb. An atomic bomb casing would also be displayed to show the size of the "Fat Man" bomb.

The section to immediately precede the *Enola Gay* was titled "Ground Zero". This section was to have displayed artifacts including a schoolgirl's lunch box and burned and shredded clothing with artifacts on loan from museums in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The stated goal was "...to show that real people stood behind these artifacts."<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, testimonies from survivors were to have been displayed to help emphasize the horrors of the bombings. In a planning document, the museum described this section as the emotional center of the exhibit.

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

## **The Exhibit**

Various scholars have cited the first draft of the *Enola Gay* exhibit as being a well researched, accurate representation of history.<sup>19</sup> Yet nevertheless some members of Congress, the Air Force Association, and the American Legion were outspoken in their criticism of the exhibit. Through a thorough examination of the exhibit's first draft it should be clearer why it garnered negative attention. It should also become apparent what critics were specifically opposed to. It's important to keep in mind some of the main arguments that the opposition used against the Smithsonian: that the atomic bombing saved lives and that the exhibit lacked balance and did not do justice to World War II veterans.

### *Section 1: "A Fight to the Finish"*

This section was designed to provide background and context for the rest of the exhibit by explaining previous campaigns in the Pacific and strategic bombing. It also dealt with racism and Japanese aggression. The section gave a sense of the impending land invasion which many American troops thought would happen at one point in the War.

Portions describing the fighting on Okinawa and Iwo Jima made clear that the fighting was extremely vicious and that there were many Japanese and American casualties. Furthermore, the text described how military planners had prepared their units for the invasion of Japan stating that there was "a potential for appalling casualties."<sup>20</sup> The exhibit mentioned that the Japanese hoped to have 5,000 kamikaze fighters for the expected American invasion. This section clearly demonstrated the feeling of the reality of a long and difficult American invasion.

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<sup>19</sup> Please refer to Barton Bernstein's comments in Philip Nobile, ed. With an afterword by Barton J. Bernstein, *Judgment at the Smithsonian*, xv. and David Thelen, "History after the Enola Gay Controversy: An Introduction," *The Journal of American History* 82, no. 3 (1995): 1029-1035.

<sup>20</sup> The Curators at the National Air and Space Museum in Philip Nobile, ed., with an afterword by Barton J. Bernstein, *Judgment at the Smithsonian*, 7.

There were also sources which demonstrated the racism that was prevalent among Americans and Japanese. A quote from the Los Angeles Times and a cartoon titled “Louseous Japonicas” which depicted the Japanese as bugs, gave a sense of this, as did a statement from *Manga Nippon* a popular Japanese magazine at the time, which stated “...the barbaric tribe of Americans are devils in human skin...”<sup>21</sup>

### *Section 2: “The Decision to Drop the Bomb”*

The second section of the Smithsonian’s exhibit addressed one of the main areas that the opposition found qualms with: the decision to drop the bomb. The exhibit mentioned that, from President Truman down, there were arguments about the justification and morality of using atomic weapons and portions of Truman’s diaries were displayed to show the unease he felt about using the bombs. For the case of alternatives, the exhibit cited arguments brought forth by Joseph Grew, the U.S. Navy, and a U.S. strategic bombing survey done in 1946 amongst others.

Joseph Grew was ambassador to Tokyo before the war started and had a great understanding of the Japanese people and their way of life. He warned President Truman that the Japanese would not accept terms of surrender unless the position of the Emperor was guaranteed. Japanese military rulers felt that Allied terms for unconditional surrender were unacceptable and it is likely that, had Emperor Hirohito’s position been guaranteed, they would have judged surrender terms more favorably. President Truman, however, did not accept Grew’s arguments.<sup>22</sup>

Another example of dissent and alternative lay with the U.S. Navy which had been conducting a large and effective blockade against Japan. The Navy believed that its blockade

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 37.

would force the already weakened Japanese to surrender because they were unable to gain access to essential goods and foodstuffs. The navy believed this would work as an alternative to a land invasion.<sup>23</sup>

The Smithsonian also mentioned the disastrous possibility of the planned land invasion of Japan. 767,000 Marines and Army soldiers would have landed on Kyushu and a force twice that size would have landed on Honshu. The exhibit mentioned that figures of around 63,000 casualties are more plausible than some of the higher numbers which are often cited.<sup>24</sup>

### *Section 3: "Delivering the Bomb"*

Based on the amount of text included, this was the longest section in the exhibit. It was designed to inform the audience about the *Enola Gay* and the people who made up the 509<sup>th</sup> Composite Group, which was responsible for flying it. Much of the section used lofty, patriotic words to describe the 509<sup>th</sup> as a "...remarkably diverse mix of airmen. Almost all were volunteers, motivated by patriotism and sense of wartime duty."<sup>25</sup> The section was also very informative about Colonel Paul Tibbets, pilot of the *Enola Gay*, mentioning that he was one of the only people with prior knowledge of the bomb's destructive power.

### *Section 4: "Ground Zero"*

This section drew the most protest from the Smithsonian's critics who attacked it for showing too many pictures of women and children casualties and too much Japanese suffering. The section did not make any attempt to sanitize the actual events. Included in the beginning of the section was information about Nagasaki being the center of the Catholic Church in Japan.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>24</sup> Martin Harwit to Hubert R. Dagley, II, 9 January 1994. Digital Library. Lehigh University. [http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round3/3\\_010995.pdf](http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round3/3_010995.pdf) (accessed 6 May 2008).

<sup>25</sup> The Curators at the National Air and Space Museum in Philip Nobile, ed., with an afterword by Barton J. Bernstein, *Judgment at the Smithsonian*, 64.

Along with this were quotes from Franciscan hospital workers and references to worshippers at Urakami Cathedral who died during their prayers. The museum described the viciousness of the bombs in detail and gave an example of a girl's school in which 16 of the 544 girls survived. The section then went on to explain the dangers of radiation poisoning and the calamity it caused.

*Section 5: "The Legacy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki"*

The *Enola Gay* exhibit ended with this section which dealt with nuclear proliferation, the Cold War, and the rise of the antinuclear movement. Information regarding the Russian entry into the War and Japan's surrender on August 15<sup>th</sup> opened the section. This was followed by President Truman's words about a third atomic bomb not being necessary. The section also mentioned a crucial point the Japanese antinuclear movement, the *Lucky Dragon No. 5*. This fishing vessel was exposed to nuclear fallout from Pacific testing in 1954. After one of the crew members died and it was discovered that Japanese fish were contaminated, many Japanese spoke out against nuclear weapons. A sub-section titled "Fifty Years of the Nuclear Dilemma," closed the section. It was a final comment on the problems of nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism.<sup>26</sup>

*Conclusion for the Enola Gay exhibit's first draft*

In the book *Judgment at the Smithsonian* edited by Philip Nobile, Nobile and contributing author and Stanford historian Barton Bernstein concluded that the NASM's first script was "...a respectable piece of written history."<sup>27</sup> Other authors such as those in *History Wars* voiced similar statements about the quality of the first script. It "celebrated American ingenuity and

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid. 117-126.

<sup>27</sup> Philip Nobile, ed. With an afterword by Barton J. Bernstein, *Judgment at the Smithsonian*, xv.

technical prowess. The two longest subsections in the exhibition script, nearly 20 percent of the entire text, reconstructed with respect and sensitivity the experiences of the *Enola Gay*'s aviators," wrote Richard Kohn.<sup>28</sup> Despite scholars who appreciated the quality of the first exhibit script, their voices were overshadowed by their critics during the controversy.

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<sup>28</sup> Richard H. Kohn, "History at Risk: The Case of the *Enola Gay*," in *History Wars*, 147.

## **Why the Opposition?**

There are many different explanations about why the *Enola Gay* exhibit caused controversy and found opponents. The authors of *History Wars* felt the main reason was that by looking at the effects of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki one had to accept that the United States was not blameless in World War II. There is a large difference between showing a picture of a mushroom cloud from high in the sky and showing pictures of the actual devastation that the bombs caused on the ground. Pictures and eyewitness accounts from victims challenged the traditional concept that some Americans held of the “Good War.”<sup>29</sup> Much of the critic’s criticism then was directed at the “Ground Zero” section of the exhibit.

Another reason for opposition to the *Enola Gay* exhibit could stem from the common belief that there were no alternatives to dropping the atomic bombs and that their use saved hundreds of thousands of lives. Researchers such as Gar Alperovitz brought forth large amounts of evidence which showed that there were other options available to the Allies. Some of these included waiting to see what influence Russian entry into the Pacific front would have had, what the effect of securing the position of the emperor in post war Japan would have been, or what power a demonstration of the new weapons would have had.<sup>30</sup> The curators at the Smithsonian benefited from the most current research by Alperowitz and others. Nevertheless, many people remained unaware of these historical facts or were unwilling to acknowledge them.

Finally, there was some specific wording which the opposition disagreed with and was used to their advantage. One example was the following quote which came from the first section of the proposed exhibit and spoke in regards to the war in the Pacific. The phrase read thus,

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<sup>29</sup> John W. Dower, “Three Narratives of Our Humanity,” in Edward T. Linenthal and Tom Engelhardt, eds., *History War: The Enola Gay and Other Battles for the American Past* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1996), 77.

<sup>30</sup> Gar Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).

“For most Americans, this was fundamentally different than the one waged against Germany and Italy—it was a war of vengeance. For most Japanese, it was a war to defend their unique culture against Western imperialism.”<sup>31</sup>

Although this statement was later changed, newspaper articles and critics continued to cite this phrase and thus help the Smithsonian’s critics garner support against the exhibit. Even though most sections of the exhibit were extremely well done, the media focused on this phrase and not the good qualities. Therefore, many people were misled into believing that the whole exhibit was full of radical statements and imbalances.

These reasons do a good job of explaining the controversy. However, because there were different groups opposed to the exhibit, there were different arguments leveled against the museum and in support of the atomic bombings. An examination of the views of the Air Force Association, the American Legion, and members of Congress will help us further understand the Smithsonian’s critics.

### *The Air Force Association*

The Air Force Association (AFA) as a lobbying group which represented the views of the Air Force to Congress and to members of the public.<sup>32</sup> The amount of lobbying power they had was great. Through its efforts it helped persuade some members of Congress against the Smithsonian. It was also able to reach a large portion of its constituency and the public through its publication, *Air Force Magazine*. The AFA was founded in 1946 under the first president, James Doolittle, leader of the Tokyo air raids which burned much of the city to the ground.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> The Curators at the National Air and Space Museum in Philip Nobile, ed., with an afterword by Barton J. Bernstein, *Judgment at the Smithsonian*, 3.

<sup>32</sup> Edward T. Linenthal, “Anatomy of a Controversy,” in *History Wars*, 35.

<sup>33</sup> Mike Wallace, “Culture War, History Front,” in *History Wars*, 172.



In a letter from Air Force General Monroe W. Hatch, Jr. of the AFA to Dr. Martin Harwit, Director of the National Air and Space Museum on September 12, 1993, Hatch described the AFA's feelings on the proposed exhibit. "Once war begins, casualties are inevitable. It is less than honest to moralize about the casualties unless one also claims the war to be immoral, and I don't believe many people are ready to say that about World War II," he wrote.<sup>34</sup>

Hatch then went on to list points of contention he had with the proposed exhibit; all of which stemmed from what he saw as a lack of balance. He called for the Smithsonian to give more attention to Pearl Harbor, Japanese aggression, and the Japanese refusal to surrender. Hatch went on to say that he was opposed to certain artifacts which were to be on display citing the schoolgirl's bomb-damaged lunch box.

As the museum drew nearer to the proposed opening date, criticism from the AFA grew more intense. General Hatch and John Correll, editor of *Air Force Magazine*, found fault with the amount of pictures dedicated to the Japanese claiming there was too much focus on Japanese casualties and women and children suffering. In a memo to General Hatch, John Correll wrote, "The picture of American dead on Iwo Jima, for example, is almost antiseptic when compared to the grisly photo of Tokyo fire raid casualties."<sup>35</sup>

Further criticism of this kind was directed at the "Ground Zero" section of the exhibit. During multiple reviews of the drafts for the *Enola Gay* exhibit, the AFA continually counted the pictures of Japanese suffering, devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and of dead of injured women and children. Their solution for the Smithsonian was to remove the pictures and many of the artifacts which made up this section. Additionally, they asked for the museum to add more

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<sup>34</sup> Monroe W. Hatch Jr., to Martin Harwit, 12 September 1993. Transcript from the Air Force Association, <http://www.afa.org/media/enolagay/09-12-93.html> (accessed 7 January 2008).

<sup>35</sup> John T. Correll to Monroe Hatch, 7 April 1994. "Analysis of Air and Space Museum Script." Transcript from the Air Force Association, <http://www.afa.org/media/enolagay/balance.html> (accessed 7 January 2008).

pictures and text regarding Japanese aggression before the War. They felt that this would provide balance to the exhibit.<sup>36</sup>

The AFA encompassed their criticisms under the viewpoint that the atomic bombings were just and necessary to end World War II. “Museum officials have seemed reluctant to accept the explanation that it was a military action, taken to end the war and save lives,” Correll wrote in *Air Force Magazine*.<sup>37</sup> This viewpoint fit with the heroic narrative of American history. The photos and artifacts showing destruction and carnage were in no way celebratory and were not flattering of the United States.

Eventually, the AFA started to voice their opinions to Congress. In a letter to the House Government Operations Subcommittee on Human Resources and Intergovernmental Relations, an AFA director encompassed their complaints with the exhibit and also listed previous steps that the AFA had taken in an attempt to get the Smithsonian to change the exhibit.<sup>38</sup> The point of the letter was clear, that the AFA was unsuccessful in changing the minds of the museum curators and that only Congress held the true power required to change the exhibit.

### *The American Legion*

As one of the five veterans responsible for collecting 5,000 signatures in petition against the Smithsonian, the opinions of B-29 veteran Burr Bennett, Jr. summarized how some veterans felt about the exhibit. In a letter to John Correll of the AFA, Burr expressed a desire to have the *Enola Gay* displayed proudly, which he felt the Smithsonian was not doing. His opinion on the

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<sup>36</sup> John T. Correll, “The Smithsonian Plan for the Enola Gay: A Report on the Revisions.” *Air Force Magazine*, 28 June 1994.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Stephen Aubin to Ron Stroman, Marty Morgan, and the House Government Operations Subcommittee on Human Resources and Intergovernmental Relations, Digital Library, Lehigh University. <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round1/afameets.pdf> (accessed 6 May 2008).

bombings was in line with the AFA, that the atomic bombs saved lives and brought a quick end to World War II.<sup>39</sup>

The importance of saving American lives was paramount to many veterans involved with the *Enola Gay* controversy. In their case it was their lives which had been spared and so they felt a real connection to the events. Scholars have also noted the importance of this and mentioned that the Smithsonian should have done likewise. Preble Stolz of the University of California – Berkeley mentioned at the time, “It is probably asking too much of people who have thought for fifty years that they owed their life to President Truman’s decision to drop the bomb to reflect objectively about whether his decision was morally justified. At its core, that asks people to consider the possibility that their life was not worth living.”<sup>40</sup>

Many veterans and other critics were upset at the amount of projected American casualties that the Smithsonian gave in the case of an Allied land invasion of Japan. As we have already seen, Barton Bernstein, using information from Admiral Leahy’s diary, found the number to have been 63,000 projected American casualties and this was the number that the Smithsonian used. The American Legion, however, debated the museum over this number.<sup>41</sup>

Also, underlying in some of the American Legion’s arguments was a fundamental difference of opinion about nuclear security; such were Burr Bennett’s feelings when he cited nuclear weapons as creating “half of a century of nuclear peace.”<sup>42</sup> This opinion conflicted with what the Smithsonian wanted to portray in their fifth section, “The Legacy of Hiroshima and

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<sup>39</sup> Burr W. Bennett, Jr., to John Correll, 6 August 1993. Digital Library, LeHigh University, [http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round1/monroe\\_hatch.PDF](http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round1/monroe_hatch.PDF) (accessed 7 January 2008).

<sup>40</sup> Edward T. Linenthal, “Anatomy of a Controversy,” in *History Wars*, 39.

<sup>41</sup> Harwit, Martin, to Hubert R. Dagley, II, 9 January 1994. Digital Library. Lehigh University. [http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round3/3\\_010995.pdf](http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round3/3_010995.pdf) (accessed 6 May 2008).

<sup>42</sup> Burr W., Bennett, Jr., to John Correll, 6 August 1993. Digital Library, LeHigh University, [http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round1/monroe\\_hatch.PDF](http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round1/monroe_hatch.PDF) (accessed 7 January 2008).

Nagasaki;” which was that nuclear weapons and nuclear proliferation created a time of fear and suspicion for people around the world.

The American Legion had a great amount of influence on the public and on Congress as well, who wanted to support the wishes of veterans who had fought for the country. The Legion even appealed to the highest figure of power at the time, President Clinton. In a letter to Clinton from August 1994, the Legion wrote of their opposition to the *Enola Gay* exhibit which they felt portrayed America as the bad guy and Japan as the victim.<sup>43</sup> Congress listened carefully to the Legion’s arguments and used them to formulate their own plan of action for the future of the Smithsonian’s exhibit.

### *Congress*

Members of Congress were also opposed to the Smithsonian’s proposed exhibit. In various news releases and letters to the museum, members of Congress stated their opinions which they sent to the Smithsonian before the exhibit had opened. Many of these reflected back to the atomic bombs saving “...the lives of hundreds of thousands of American soldiers,”<sup>44</sup> however, others mentioned the neglect of the Smithsonian to chronicle Japan’s aggression during the war. Nevertheless, many agreed with what Congressman Peter Blute called an “outrageous bias” in the exhibit.<sup>45</sup>

Congressman Sam Johnson expressed an argument which was shared by other members of Congress: that the *Enola Gay* exhibit conflicted with the charter of the Air and Space Museum.

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<sup>43</sup> Bruce Theisen to The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton, 12 August 1994, Digital Library, Lehigh University, <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round2/alclinton.pdf> (accessed 6 May 2008).

<sup>44</sup> Peter Blute, “Congressmen Send Letter Blasting Planned Smithsonian Exhibit of Enola Gay,” Congressional News Release, 10 August 1994, <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round2/congressreleases.PDF> (accessed 7 January 2008).

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

His news release quoted the Smithsonian charter which read, “The valor and sacrificial service of the men and women of the Armed Forces shall be portrayed as an inspiration to the present and future generations of America,”<sup>46</sup> something which he felt the Smithsonian was not doing.

But the issue of money might have had the most influence on the Smithsonian. The Smithsonian was a federally funded museum and, according to a recent budget report, approximately 80 percent of the funding came from the government.<sup>47</sup> Because of this, the opinions of Congress were extremely important for the Smithsonian to consider. Congressman Tom Lewis wrote in a news release “Taxpayers fund this museum, and I will not allow their money to be spent revising history.”<sup>48</sup> Beside the arguable use of the term *revising*, Lewis’s central argument was clear. The issue of money and how the Smithsonian was spending it, was to be a deciding factor in how the museum proceeded with the exhibit.

Congress eventually took stronger action against the museum and these were probably the most concrete, decisive factors for the outcome of the *Enola Gay* exhibit. In September, 1994 the Senate passed Resolution 257 which resolved that the exhibit should respect and honor veterans. The resolution also referred to the atomic bombings bringing World War II to a “merciful end” by saving American and Japanese lives.<sup>49</sup>

Then, in May 1995, one month before the redone *Enola Gay* exhibit opened, Congress held a meeting under the title “The Smithsonian Institution: Management Guidelines For the Future.” This meeting was a good example of how much Congress became involved in the

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<sup>46</sup> Sam Johnson, “Purpose of Enola Gay Exhibit Disputed,” Congressional News Release, 10 August 1994, <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round2/congressreleases.PDF> (accessed 7 January 2008).

<sup>47</sup> Smithsonian Institution. “Fiscal Year 2008 Budget Request to Congress.” <http://www.si.edu/about/budget/2008/01%20-%20Congressional%20Overview%20FY%202008.pdf> (accessed 4 March 2008).

<sup>48</sup> Tom Lewis, “Lewis Disappointed With Smithsonian Director’s Explanation of Japanese Bias in Upcoming Exhibit on Atomic Bomb,” Congressional News Release, 10 August 1994, <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round2/congressreleases.PDF> (accessed 7 January 2008).

<sup>49</sup> U.S. Congress. Senate. *Senate Resolution 257 – Relating to the “Enola Gay” Exhibit*. Congressional Record. September 1994, vol. 140, no. 131.

exhibit and how much power they had to change what was displayed. Guests at the meeting included a pilot who flew on both the Hiroshima and Nagasaki missions, the President of the AFA, and a chairman from the American Legion. The groups which were most outspoken against the Smithsonian finally had their opportunity and accomplished their goals through Congress.<sup>50</sup>

Another blow to the exhibit came when Congressman Johnson, one of the most vocal opponents of the original *Enola Gay* exhibit, was appointed a regent of the Smithsonian. This was one further example of how influential Congress was and how the changes between the planned and final exhibits took place.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Rules and Administration, *The Smithsonian Institution: Management Guidelines for the Future*, Hearings before the Committee on Rules and Administration, 104<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 11 May 1995, Printing Office.

<sup>51</sup> Rowan Scarborough, "Smithsonian boss scoffs at rumors GOP rules exhibits; Heyman moves against negativism," *Washington Times*, 9 May 1995, A6.

## The Press

Members of the press had differing opinions and ways of covering the *Enola Gay* exhibit. Some journalists agreed with the “heroic narrative” view of American history, while others were critical of this view and supported the Smithsonian. Newspapers and magazines across the country covered the event, including the major newspaper located closest to the unfolding events, *The Washington Post*.

In August 1994, the *Washington Post* printed a letter to the editor which criticized the museum for giving into “political correctness” and “historical revisionism.” The article relied mostly on veteran’s arguments or particular lines from the original draft proposal. Specific lines from the proposal were picked apart, for example the following line: “Some have argued that the United States would never have dropped the bomb on the Germans...”<sup>52</sup> The author of the editorial used this phrase to express an imbalance in the exhibit. However, this line was taken out of context; the actual script mentioned prior to this that the atomic bomb was developed for use against the Germans and it followed the previously cited line with “...the consensus of most, if not all, historians is that President Roosevelt would have used the bomb on Germany.”<sup>53</sup>

In another article critical of the exhibit, *Post* reporter Jonathan Yardley in “Dropping a Bomb of an Idea” criticized the National Air and Space Museum and its curators, calling the exhibit “anti-American propaganda,” and “bad history.”<sup>54</sup> He also quoted a line from the exhibit script about the war in the Pacific being a “war of vengeance;” however, he used ellipses to delete the part of the sentence which highlighted the differences between the European and

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<sup>52</sup> Charles Krauthammer, “World War II, Revised; Or, how we bombed Japan out of racism and spite,” *Washington Post*, 19 August 1994, 27(A).

<sup>53</sup> The Curators at the National Air and Space Museum in Philip Nobile, ed., with an afterword by Barton J. Bernstein, *Judgment at the Smithsonian*, 30.

<sup>54</sup> Johnathan Yardley, “Dropping a Bomb of an Idea,” *Washington Post*, 10 October 1994, 2(B).

Pacific fronts, giving the impression that the Smithsonian was calling all of World War II a “war of vengeance.”

In November 1994, the *Post* staff writer Eugene Meyer had a different viewpoint in his article, “A-Bomb Exhibit Takes Another Hit; Academics Blast Revised Script For Beleaguered Smithsonian Show,” which described the efforts of 53 historians around the U.S. who urged the museum to reconsider removing valuable artifacts and pictures. The article portrayed the historians in a positive way and supported the museum’s previous efforts.<sup>55</sup>

Finally, a January 1995 staff article, again by Meyer, was quite balanced in its opinion and used more dispassionate, objective language. Meyer described the efforts of the American Legion and Congress, as well as the historians’ side of the argument. He also cited Bernstein’s research on the estimates of projected U.S. casualties, provided a land invasion of Japan had happened.

For the most part, the *Washington Post* printed articles which were critical of the Smithsonian. This is important because the *Post* was a major newspaper with a wide readership, and it was located close to the events surrounding the controversy. Jonathan Yardley’s slight change to the wording of the intended script could have drastically affected how the public viewed the *Enola Gay* exhibit.

But the *Washington Post* was not the only newspaper to report on the events. Newspapers around the country published differing accounts of the Smithsonian – *Enola Gay* controversy and their coverage had a great influence on the way the public viewed the controversy, especially since most Americans had no opportunity to read either of the proposed scripts for the exhibit.

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<sup>55</sup> Eugene L. Meyer, “A-Bomb Exhibit Takes Another Hit; Academics Blast Revised Script For Beleaguered Smithsonian Show,” *Washington Post*, 18 November 1994, 1(F).



### **Wisconsin Opinion of the Exhibit and the Bombs**

The Smithsonian –*Enola Gay* controversy rekindled debate over the use of atomic weapons in World War II. This debate had gone on since the use of the weapons, however, at certain times it had received less attention. With the Smithsonian again looking at the issue, many members of the public were forced to re-examine their own opinions. Therefore the events surrounding the exhibit offered a glimpse into the American public’s views of the bombings.

This was true not just of Washington D.C. residents but of Wisconsin residents as well. Various editorials, as well as staff articles, from Wisconsin newspapers, including the *Eau Claire Leader Telegram*, captured the feelings and attitudes of select members of these communities.

It was interesting, however, that Wisconsin residents expressed themselves just as much as residents of Washington DC, or other major metropolises. This was an unexpected byproduct of the Smithsonian – *Enola Gay* controversy; because of the media coverage the exhibit received, “An ironic outcome of the episode was that far more Americans undoubtedly became aware of the scholarly debate over the atomic bomb decision than would otherwise have been the case.”<sup>56</sup> There was no unifying or single consensus in Wisconsin about whether or not the Smithsonian was right or wrong. However, there was lively debate – and if the washing over of the *Enola Gay* exhibit was a blow to democratic ideals, at least the debate over the events, such as that in Wisconsin newspapers, was a positive sign for democracy.

#### *Eau Claire: The Eau Claire Leader Telegram*

Many letters to the editor in the *Leader Telegram* came from veterans and their opinions were similar to veterans in the American Legion which was vocal against the Smithsonian. Between October 1994 and October 1995 the *Leader Telegram* printed 15 articles and editorials

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 116

dealing with the *Enola Gay* exhibit and the atomic bombs. 11 of those were letters to the editor from individuals who felt that the atomic bombings were necessary and saved lives. The sample of people who agreed with the Smithsonian exhibit or that the atomic bombs were unnecessary amounted to a small minority.

Editorials written by veterans usually referred to their having been in the war and used this as a trump card, topping all other arguments against atomic weapons. These usually came in statements such as “believe me, I was there.”<sup>57</sup> *History Wars* contributing writer Michael Sherry mentioned that the American Legion also used such arguments; that “only veterans could divine the meanings of the atomic attacks.”<sup>58</sup>

Although most of the veterans were in agreement that the atomic weapons saved lives, opinions varied about the amounts which ranged from thousands to 300,000 American lives. One even suggested that “over a million Japanese lives” were saved as a result of the atomic bombings.<sup>59</sup> One problem with numbers such as these is that they can become exaggerated quite quickly as they are spread through second hand information. One scholar suggested “it is not possible to argue that by dropping the two atomic bombs so quickly he [Truman] immediately saved countless tens or hundreds of thousands of American lives.”<sup>60</sup>

Some of the editorials were scathing toward the Smithsonian; one urged Congress to cut the museum’s funding, while another called Smithsonian curators “lily-livered officials.”<sup>61</sup> The terms “historical revisionism” and “inaccuracies and biases” also showed up in the editorials; terms which the Air Force Association, American Legion, and members of the press often used to criticize the museum.

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<sup>57</sup> Wayne R. Atkins, “Bomb saved lives,” *The Leader-Telegram*, 9 October 1994, editorial.

<sup>58</sup> Michael S. Sherry, “Patriotic Orthodoxy and American Decline,” in *History Wars*, 100.

<sup>59</sup> Boyd Andersen, “End bomb debate,” *The Leader-Telegram*, 10 February 1995, editorial.

<sup>60</sup> John W. Dower, “Three Narratives of Our Humanity,” in *History Wars*, 80.

<sup>61</sup> Donald M. Board, “Revising History,” *The Leader-Telegram*, 7 March 1995, editorial.

Some of the editorials also used stereotypes and negative language toward the Japanese. Examples of this included reference to Japanese women and children as suicide-bent and calling Japanese people “fanatical.”<sup>62</sup> The minority of editorials which disagreed with the atomic bombs or stood up for the Smithsonian exhibit used quotes from Admiral William Leahy, President Eisenhower, and Brigadier General Bonnie Fellers, to support their arguments. One heated article pointed out the similarities between the bombs and other acts of terrorism and finished by saying “if the Nazis had used it before we defeated them, its use would have been included in the catalog of war crimes they were accused of.”<sup>63</sup>

One article written by a *Leader Telegram* staff member gave a list of books which children could use to learn about the atomic bombings. These books described the horrors and destructiveness of the bombings and it was clear that the author of the article hoped to share the view of “the necessity to find alternatives to war.”<sup>64</sup> Two other staff articles had different opinions and were either written by or about veterans of the war. There appeared to be varying opinion even among the *Leader Telegram* staff writers.

#### *Madison: The Capital Times and the Wisconsin State Journal*

Unlike those in the *Leader-Telegram* many letters to the editor in the *Capital Times* supported the Smithsonian and criticized the bombs. Five of six editorials on the subject shared this point of view. Three included the opinions of veterans; however, the background of people was diverse and included a leader of the anti-Vietnam War movement in Wisconsin.

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<sup>62</sup> Boyd Andersen, “End bomb debate,” *The Leader-Telegram*, 10 February 1995, editorial and Vernon E. Andersen, “Never forget,” *The Leader-Telegram*, 10 March 1995, editorial.

<sup>63</sup> Lou Recine, “Bomb a crime,” *The Leader-Telegram*, 16 August 1995, editorial.

<sup>64</sup> Cris Peterson, “Books help children understand legacy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki,” *The Leader-Telegram*, 9 August 1995.

Many of the editorials which supported the Smithsonian's original exhibit cited evidence that the Japanese might have surrendered without the bombs, the other options which were available, and quotes from prominent leaders, such as Dwight Eisenhower, which criticized the bombings. The letters to the editor were less emotionally charged and more carefully crafted than some in the *Leader-Telegram*. Many authors suggested alternatives and ways to move on; one author simply suggested that the bombings deserved to be more closely examined. Another author asked the question "How could our ancestors have done that to themselves?" speaking of World War II in general.<sup>65</sup>

The most interesting editorial came from John Patrick Hunter, a veteran who had served in the war and stood on the deck of the USS Missouri when Japan unconditionally surrendered. Hunter made a strong case against nuclear weapons. His opinion coincided with the Navy's opinion at that time, that the Japanese were on the verge of giving up before the bombs were dropped. He wrote, "War is an abomination. Every casualty is a tragedy. If the Smithsonian exhibit is supposed to glorify war or victory, it should think twice about its plans."<sup>66</sup>

Hunter's article was important because he was in Hiroshima in 1945 and saw the devastation of the bomb. Not only did he bring experience as a veteran, but also personal testimony of ground zero. Furthermore, he mentioned that he returned to Hiroshima in 1981 to pay tribute to those lost on both sides. His article presented an interesting question: If other World War II veterans had seen what Hunter had seen in Hiroshima, would they have changed their opinions? Would they have questioned the logic that the bombs were justified?

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<sup>65</sup> "Pseudo-History Serves No One," *Capital Times*, 1 February 1995, editorial, 7(A).  
and Richard S. Russell, "Truman Was Product Of Times," *Capital Times*, 18 March 1995, editorial, 13(A).

<sup>66</sup> "John Patrick Hunter, "Smithsonian Should Drop Bomb Exhibit," *Capital Times*, 1 September 1994, editorial, 13(A).

In the article “Fifty Years Ago This Week,” *Capital Times* staff writer John Nichols expressed similar thoughts. He cited the examples of US Senator Mark Hatfield and General Eisenhower, both who had witnessed the damage in Hiroshima in 1945 and who were critics of the bomb. Hatfield has “made his stand ever since” wrote Nichols, “as a leading Senate supporter of the nuclear freeze, a foe of new weapons programs and a consistent opponent of US military adventurism.”<sup>67</sup>

In the *Wisconsin State Journal*, there was less support for the *Enola Gay* exhibit. Of a total of six letters to the editor, four were critical of the exhibit and expressed desire to see it cancelled. Those same four used language critical of the museum, calling the curator’s actions “arrogant, and idiotic.”<sup>68</sup> However, the letters to the editor which supported the original exhibit were eloquent and made interesting points.

One letter to the editor, “History Could Use Change,” placed the events surrounding the exhibit in the broader context of the argument over the national history standards. Another titled “You Supply History At Enola Gay Exhibit,” was the only letter to the editor to criticize the museum for giving into the pressure of its critics and for changing the exhibit. The author made observed that only “airplane buffs” would find the new displays interesting. Furthermore, he expressed his regret that the Japanese civilians who were killed were being “silenced,” and that their voices would not be heard.<sup>69</sup>

The opinions of the *Wisconsin State Journal* overall were a little harder to determine. However, because of the number of critical letters to the editor which were published, and some

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<sup>67</sup> John Nichols, “Fifty Years Ago This Week,” *Capital Times*, 7 August 1995, 1(C).

<sup>68</sup> “Smithsonian Shows Arrogance,” *Wisconsin State Journal*, 24 January 1995, Opinion, 7(A). and Frank Duesler, “Do Smithsonian Curators Meet Competency Test?” *Wisconsin State Journal*, 10 February 1995, Opinion, 11(A).

<sup>69</sup> Phil Brinkman, “You Supply History At Enola Gay Exhibit,” *Wisconsin State Journal*, 6 August 1995, Opinion, 2(B).

slightly critical articles from staff writers, it appeared that the consensus was more opposed to the Smithsonian exhibit it was supportive of it. One staff article titled “Hiroshima Display Angers WWII Vets,” was implicit with its title that the exhibit was upsetting. Two other articles were forum articles, one of them by a staff writer. These described the events post-hoc, but gave no mention of censorship or appropriation of history. The forum staff article described the newly redone exhibit and the author quoted Smithsonian Secretary Heyman’s piece about the many “tens of thousands of deaths” caused by the atomic bombs. The *Wisconsin State Journal* author used this quotation as if it was acceptable offering no criticism of the redone exhibit.

*Milwaukee: The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*

The *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* had the greatest amount of staff articles of the three Wisconsin newspapers this paper has looked at. Of eight articles, between 1995 and 1996, which pertained in some way to the Smithsonian – *Enola Gay* controversy, five were written by staff members of the newspaper. The majority of the articles came out somewhat supportive of the museum. However, the opinions were diverse and there were a fair share of negative articles as well. The coverage started off, for example, with a staff article that was anything but supportive of the exhibit.

The January, 1995 article titled “Enola Gay legacy: No bombs since Hiroshima, Nagasaki” used scathing language and various loaded words in an attempt to convince the reader that the Smithsonian had committed an atrocity by questioning American righteousness. Most specifically, the author attacked the museum for believing lower predicted numbers of American casualties in a hypothetical land invasion.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> “Enola Gay legacy: No bombs since Hiroshima, Nagasaki,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 24 January 1995, 8(News).

Following this article, however, a letter to the editor was published with a much different view. The author of “Blanding down the A-bomb story” stated that the *Enola Gay* exhibit had been “polluted...by politics,” and especially blamed Newt Gingrich for this, a figure that other scholars also criticized for his handling of the *Enola Gay* exhibit.<sup>71</sup> The article concluded by saying, “The opportunity to spark intelligent discussion and to learn has been lost.”<sup>72</sup>

This was quickly followed by two more letters to the editor which had different view points. One pointed to what the author saw as a lack of balance in the exhibit’s picture displays – showing too much Japanese suffering and not enough of “the hardships suffered by Americans.”<sup>73</sup>

Around May of 1995, more staff articles were written which seemed to support the Smithsonian’s attempts in the *Enola Gay* exhibit. An interview with a B-29 pilot who participated in the Tokyo fire bombings was quite descriptive in its portrayal of the damage the bombs caused and the horrors victims suffered.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, the article briefly mentioned the U.S. Strategic Bombing survey which concluded that the atomic bombs were not necessary for Japan to surrender.<sup>75</sup>

The author of “Time to own up to our part of the horror” was also supportive of the Smithsonian, especially with its attempts to display pictures. “The reality of Hiroshima can best be portrayed in the photographs of the bomb’s impact and in the statements of those who participated in or survived the attacks,” wrote the Richard Foster, author of the article.<sup>76</sup> Foster

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<sup>71</sup> For example see Mike Wallace, “Culture War, History Front” in *History Wars*, 174-180.

<sup>72</sup> “Blanding down the A-bomb story,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 1 February 1995, 10(Editorial).

<sup>73</sup> “A-bomb exhibit reopens old wounds,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 8 February 1995, 12(Letters).

<sup>74</sup> Ernst-Ulrich Franzen, “Veteran of deadly Tokyo bombing raid cannot forget the devastation Pewaukee Lake man flew 36 missions as B-29 co-pilot in WWII,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 26 May 1995, 1(AU).

<sup>75</sup> For more information on this see Gar Alperowitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb* (Vintage Books: New York, 1993), 4.

<sup>76</sup> Richard Foster, “It’s time to own up to our part of horror,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 30 July 1995, 1(J).

was a *Journal Sentinel* staff member, however, this article was published in the Opinion section of the paper. Citing information from Gar Alperowitz's *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*, Foster concluded that Americans should admit that it was a mistake to use atomic weapons and should make a better attempt to understand the horrors of the bombs.

Finally, two very different book reviews showed the varying opinions which were present in the *Journal Sentinel*. The first reviewed the book *Hiroshima in America: Fifty Years of Denial*. The author of the review was critical of the book the author's findings that there were alternatives to using atomic weapons. Also, the review author stated "most Americans [in 1945] agreed with the decision to drop the bomb on Japan."<sup>77</sup>

The second piece reviewed *History Wars*, edited by Edward Linenthal and Tom Engelhardt. The author of the review was positive and supportive of the historical facts and evidence which the authors of *History Wars* presented and concluded by recommending the book to students and anyone interested in history or current events.<sup>78</sup>

As with the other Wisconsin newspapers we have looked at, there were varying opinions presented in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. Furthermore, the opinions and attitudes of the *Journal Sentinel* staff changed throughout the months between 1995 and 1996 from a critical, to more of a supportive view of the Smithsonian exhibit. As with other Wisconsin newspapers, coverage in the *Journal Sentinel* showed the interest that Wisconsin residents had toward the presentation of history and the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

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<sup>77</sup> Ernst-Ulrich Franzen, "How we learned to fear the future," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 6 August 1995, 7(E).

<sup>78</sup> David Walton, "50 years later, A-bomb issues still heated, divisive," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 11 August 1996, 11(All Edition).



### **Changes: The Final Draft of the Exhibit**

Because of the intense pressure which the Smithsonian faced, it was forced to redo the proposed exhibit. The museum also made changes to the planning committees and included new members who brought their own agendas to the exhibit. At the opening of the new *Enola Gay* exhibit Secretary Michael Heyman stated “I have concluded that we bade a basic error in attempting to couple a historical treatment of the use of the atomic weapons with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemoration of the end of the war.”<sup>79</sup> This statement, however, hardly reflected the real situation and the intense pressure that the museum faced with the original exhibit.

The first change to the final draft of the exhibit was the addition of a whole new section. This section, “The War in the Pacific” was much different from anything that the Smithsonian had originally intended to display. The section covered Japanese aggression in Asia, Pearl Harbor, the Bataan Death March, and war in the Philippines. In a drastically different approach, the new exhibit stated “The Pearl Harbor attack plunged the United States into a just war against Japanese aggression in the Pacific.”<sup>80</sup>

The second section, “A Fight to the Finish,” was scaled back. The museum altered the information on strategic bombing and removed details of Japanese suffering from the areas dealing with incendiary bombs. Also detailed information on the kamikaze was scaled back. Finally, the section on American racism toward the Japanese was almost entirely deleted from the exhibit. Critics successfully removed the racist quote from the *Los Angeles Times* and the cartoon “Louseous Japonicas” which depicted the Japanese as bugs.

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<sup>79</sup> Michael I. Heyman, “Excerpts from Smithsonian Secretary I. Michael Heyman’s Statement at the opening of the Enola Gay exhibit at the National Air & Space Museum,” Digital Library, Lehigh University, <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round4/sopeningremarks.pdf> (accessed 6 May 2008).

<sup>80</sup> Curators of the National Air and Space Museum, “The Last Act: The Atomic Bomb and the End of World War II.” <http://www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/key-issues/nuclear-weapons/history/post-cold-war/smithsonian-controversy/index.htm> (accessed 13 January 2008).

The Smithsonian deleted a quote from the second section which originally read “By the summer of 1945, Japan was a nation on the brink of collapse.”<sup>81</sup> In the final exhibit, no reference was made to the weakened state of Japan toward the end of the war.

So much of the section “The Decision to Drop the Bomb” was removed that almost nothing of the original remained. New exhibit planners removed every reference to impressing the Soviet Union with the bomb, along with all the “Historical Controversies” questions such as “Was the bomb justified?” They also removed references to alternatives to the bombs, including information about Joseph Grew who advised Truman to secure the place of the Emperor in order to get Japan to surrender.<sup>82</sup>

Planners washed over this section, giving the impression that there had never been any opposition to the bombings. The opinions of Admiral Leahy and President Eisenhower were not mentioned; it was as if they had never voiced any opposition or reservations at all. Michael Sherry, a contributing writer to *History Wars*, described how the Smithsonian’s critics or, as he called them, “orthodox patriots,” “all but obliterated such reservations from their otherwise lengthy accounts, as if embarrassed by them, and assailed as ‘revisionist’ those who highlighted the doubts of an earlier generation’s leaders.”<sup>83</sup>

The museum expanded the section describing the *Enola Gay* and its crew as well as pre-mission information including pictures of the crew and technical equipment. For the most part, however, only a military or aviation buff would have found the additional material interesting.

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<sup>81</sup> The Curators at the National Air and Space Museum in Philip Nobile, ed., with an afterword by Barton J. Bernstein, *Judgment at the Smithsonian*, 88.

<sup>82</sup> Curators of the National Air and Space Museum, “The Last Act: The Atomic Bomb and the End of World War II.” <http://www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/key-issues/nuclear-weapons/history/post-cold-war/smithsonian-controversy/index.htm>

<sup>83</sup> Michael S. Sherry, “Patriotic Orthodoxy and American Decline,” in *History Wars*, 101.

Critics also removed mention of Colonel Tibbets having prior knowledge of the bombs destructive power and about the 509<sup>th</sup> Composite division gambling in their free time before their fateful mission. Finally, the entire text of Truman's statement which referred to Hiroshima as an "important Japanese Army base" was removed.<sup>84</sup> To a modern audience who knew that Hiroshima was an actual living, thriving city this statement would have seemed a little ridiculous.

The Ground Zero section garnered the most criticism and indeed many parts in the new exhibit were changed or removed which would have given the audience a better understanding of the effects of the atomic bombs. In fact, the name itself, "Ground Zero" was changed to "Hiroshima and Nagasaki" giving the impression that not much had changed in the two cities after the bombing.<sup>85</sup>

Historians who later criticized the Smithsonian for giving into pressure listed in their criticism that the museum changed the wording of the number of casualties from the atomic bombings from their actual numbers, about 130,000 in Hiroshima and 70,000 in Nagasaki, to "many tens of thousands of deaths."<sup>86</sup> This particular statement came from an introduction to the exhibit, which was given by Smithsonian secretary I. Michael Heyman.<sup>87</sup>

The Smithsonian also removed many testimonial accounts of survivors of the bombings. These included testimonies from the principle of a girl's high school from which almost all the students were killed, a mother who had her baby daughter killed while on her back, and a woman who described the effects of radiation poisoning in students. Additionally, the final version of

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<sup>84</sup> The Curators at the National Air and Space Museum in Philip Nobile, ed., with an afterword by Barton J. Bernstein, *Judgment at the Smithsonian*, 88.

<sup>85</sup> Curators of the Air and Space Museum, "The Last Act: The Atomic Bomb and the End of World War II." <http://www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/key-issues/nuclear-weapons/history/post-cold-war/smithsonian-controversy/index.htm>

<sup>86</sup> Bird, Kai and Martin Sherwin to Heyman, Michael I., "The Historians' Letter to the Smithsonian," 31 July 1995. <http://www.doug-long.com/letter.htm> (accessed 7 January 2008).

<sup>87</sup> "Components of Exhibit," *Wisconsin State Journal*, 24 December 1995, Forum 1(B).

the exhibit gave no reference to Christianity in Nagasaki and made no reference to Nagasaki being the center of the Catholic Church in Japan at the time of the bombing. The statements from Franciscan monks describing the devastation were left out.<sup>88</sup>

As with the section “The Decision to Drop the Bomb,” the final section “The Legacy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki” was greatly edited and changed. The name became “Japan Surrenders;” this title represented the degree that the Smithsonian had shifted their attention from the bombs having lasting negative effects to them being a rather isolated incident with few consequences.

New exhibit planners also removed various subheading titles such, “The Cold War and the Nuclear Arms Race” and “The Failure of International Control.” Furthermore, almost nothing of consequence was added that could provide equal information. The three subsections that were added were “Shock and Surrender, The Occupation of Japan, and Legacy of the Bomb.” These additions created the impression that the consequences of atomic weapons were minimal and that the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had few further implications.

The Smithsonian gave into the pressure of their opponents and created an exhibit which offered no criticism of the bombs. In an article that John Correll wrote for *Air Force Magazine*, Martin Harwit, director of the National Air and Space Museum, was quoted as suggesting to his staff “take out all but about one third of the explicit pictures of death and suffering in section 400 [Ground Zero].”<sup>89</sup> Pressure from the AFA and others was strong enough for even the highest Smithsonian officials to work counter to their intents and remove fundamental artifacts like the Ground Zero pictures. This along with references mentioning opposition or alternatives to the

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<sup>88</sup> Curators of the Air and Space Museum, “The Last Act: The Atomic Bomb and the End of World War II.” <http://www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/key-issues/nuclear-weapons/history/post-cold-war/smithsonian-controversy/index.htm>

<sup>89</sup> John T. Correll, “The Smithsonian Plan for the Enola Gay: A Report on the Revisions.” *Air Force Magazine*, 28 June 1994.

bombs being removed recreated the exhibit in a way that presented the atomic bombings as necessary and just.

One could therefore make a good argument that the Smithsonian had censored history. Although no actual facts were altered, the texts and pictures were very selectively chosen and the museum was very careful about what it did and did not include in the exhibit. The information was presented in a way which only gave one side of the story. John Dower in *History Wars* described this as a “heroic narrative.” “Heroic narratives demand a simple, unilinear story line.”<sup>90</sup> The Smithsonian’s *Enola Gay* exhibit had lost the value of representing a piece of historical scholarship and instead turned into a celebration of America, the end of World War II, and the atomic bombs.

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<sup>90</sup> John W. Dower, “Three Narratives of Our Humanity,” in *History Wars*, 80.

### **Conclusion: Consequences of the *Enola Gay* Exhibit**

The original plan for the Smithsonian's *Enola Gay* exhibit was well planned and crafted. It drew on the latest scholarly research and benefited from the help of many prominent historians. However, it was criticized by groups who had fundamental differences in the way that American history should be viewed. The Smithsonian was forced to alter what had once been an accurate exhibition script into one which was lacking many essential components.

Newspapers and press sources around the country portrayed the Smithsonian in both negative and positive ways and their descriptions of the museum played key roles in how the public felt about the *Enola Gay* exhibit. Because the exhibit stirred so much discussion, citizens wrote editorials and letters to the editor describing their feelings. In Wisconsin alone, there was vibrant discussion about whether or not the museum should have shown what they intended, or whether or not the atomic bombings were necessary.

Nevertheless, because the new *Enola Gay* exhibit did not portray a full and accurate view of history, there were other, more unfortunate, consequences and the way which the world viewed America changed. After the new exhibit was opened, visitors were encouraged to write comment cards to describe their feelings as they exited. Written on one comment card was a letter from a Japanese visitor, possibly a student. The writing was simple and short, but the message was profound. "When you open next exhibition, please cooperate with Japan," read the letter. "Please open more big scale exhibition. Please think of Hiroshima from inside of Japan."<sup>91</sup> With no outward resentment or indignity toward the museum, this visitor patiently told the Smithsonian what the curators already knew they should have done: cooperated internationally to present a full picture of the historical events.

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<sup>91</sup> Smithsonian Institution, Smithsonian Archives, "A Collection of Comment Cards Left by Visitors to the *Enola Gay* Exhibit at the National Air and Space Museum," Digital Library, Lehigh University <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round4/commentcards.pdf> (accessed 6 May 2008).

The *Enola Gay* controversy also had important implications for the field of history. In similar fashion to the controversy over the National History Standards, Congress flexed their muscles to intimidate scholars and educators with differing viewpoints. In the case of the Smithsonian, this meant that images, stories, and testimonials which portrayed America in a negative way, or even as the aggressor, had to be removed.

Groups such as the Organization for American Historians, the Committee for a National Discussion of Nuclear History and Current Policy, and the Historians Committee for Open Debate on Hiroshima condemned the actions of Congress influencing history. These organizations drew up resolutions and statements which outlined their guidelines, emphasizing the “autonomy of American museums.”<sup>92</sup> In other cases scholars became more aware of the power which government could wield over history and the importance that historians have to present the truth, even if it encounters criticism.

In another case, historians, especially the curators at the Smithsonian, were forced to take a closer look at what the majority of the American people actually thought which, in fact, might have been different than what curators assumed. In other words, the Smithsonian could have benefited by looking at Gallup polls conducted since the war’s end. In 1945, 85% of Americans approved of the atomic bombings. Although it’s easy to assume that Americans would change their minds after new research became available, it would be incorrect. In July 1995, for

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<sup>92</sup> For more information on these organizations and the resolutions they adopted in response to Congress please see Committee for a National Discussion of Nuclear History and Current Policy, “Statement of Principles,” <http://web.archive.org/web/20031130174952/http://enola-gay.org/> and John R. Dichtl, “A Chronology of the Smithsonian’s Last Act,” *OAH Newsletter* 22 (Nov. 1994): 9-10.

example, 59% of Americans still supported the bombings; this was opposed to 39% who disapproved.<sup>93</sup>

In many cases it was in the eye of the beholder whether or not a burned and charred school girl's lunch box, for example, portrayed Americans to be the enemy. Some argued that by having a better, more accurate understanding of the past and of atomic destruction not only Americans but the world could benefit – having the desire to never see, nor to cause such destruction again. The valuable opportunity to understand this was lost to many between 1993 and 1995 in the Smithsonian – *Enola Gay* controversy.

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<sup>93</sup> David W. Moore, “Majority Supports Use of Atomic Bomb on Japan in WWII.” Gallup News Service, 5 August 2005 <http://www.gallup.com/poll/17677/Majority-Supports-Use-Atomic-Bomb-Japan-WWII.aspx> (accessed 3 May 2008).



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Adams, Bob, to Martin Harwit, 17 July 1993. Digital Library. Lehigh University, <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round1/adams.pdf> (accessed 19 March 2008).

In this letter, which was written during the planning stages of the exhibit, Smithsonian Secretary Bob Adams wrote of his concerns and some problems he saw with the exhibit. Some of his complaints included not enough information on war conditions leading up to the bombings, and the title of the exhibit, which he proposed to be changed.

Aubin, Stephen, to Ron Stroman, Marty Morgan, and the House Government Operations Subcommittee on Human Resources and Intergovernmental Relations. Digital Library. Lehigh University. <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round1/afameets.pdf> (accessed 6 May 2008).

This letter was an example of how early the AFA appealed to Congress. Their pressure, along with that of the American Legion, on Congress was influential in having the *Enola Gay* exhibit redone.

Bennett, Jr., Burr W., to John Correll, 6 August 1993. Digital Library, LeHigh University, [http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round1/monroe\\_hatch.PDF](http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round1/monroe_hatch.PDF) (accessed 7 January 2008).

This letter describes the opinions of a B-29 bomber veteran about the Enola Gay exhibit. Burr offers his criticism while appealing to the Editor of *Air Force Magazine*. It is important to understand the opinions of the veterans, who made up one of the Smithsonian's largest group of critics.

Bird, Kai and Martin Sherwin to Heyman, Michael I., "The Historians' Letter to the Smithsonian," 31 July 1995. <http://www.doug-long.com/letter.htm> (accessed 7 January 2008).

With a long list of signatories, the authors of this letter criticizes the Smithsonian for giving into pressure and for removing essential historical facts; in other words, for censoring the exhibit. Professors of history from many major universities signed the letter, which was addressed to Smithsonian secretary, Michael Heyman. Their argument is narrowed into five specific points where they found the exhibit to be most flawed.

Blute, Peter, "Congressmen Send Letter Blasting Planned Smithsonian Exhibit of Enola Gay," Congressional News Release, 10 August 1994, <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round2/congressreleases.PDF> (accessed 7 January 2008).

Blute was one of the most prominent Congressmen to put pressure on the Smithsonian. He saw the Enola Gay exhibit as having a Japanese bias. His argument likens to those of the Air Force Association and American Legion, that the atomic bombs were necessary. He goes a step further to say that even questioning the bombs was inappropriate. It is important to understand the opinions of members of Congress, since they held great influence over the Smithsonian.

Blute, Peter, "Smithsonian Responss to Congressmen's Criticism on Exhibit of Enola Gay," Congressional News Release, 17 August 1994, <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round2/congressreleases.PDF> (accessed 7 January 2008).

This news release shows that Blute was determined not to give up until the Smithsonian changed its exhibit. He mentioned that he had 24 members of Congress on his side at this time. He also mentions that the exhibit was the first ever showing of the Enola Gay to the public; an interesting point to consider when writing about the importance of the Smithsonian controversy.

Charles Krauthammer, "World War II, Revised; Or, how we bombed Japan out of racism and spite," *Washington Post*, 19 August 1994, 27(A).

This is the most opinionated *Washington Post* article that I could find on this subject. The author is critical of the Smithsonian, calling the exhibit "historical revisionism." It argues that the U.S. would have dropped the bomb on Germany and cites the example of Dresden. The author even goes so far as to agree with General Paul Tibbets, that the whole exhibit should be dropped. This is an opinionated, and very important article showing that the press was critical of the Smithsonian and offered little support for the exhibit.

Committee for a National Discussion of Nuclear History and Current Policy. "Statement of Principles." <http://web.archive.org/web/20031130174952/http://enola-gay.org/> (accessed 6 May 2008).

I briefly mentioned this group and the document which they adopted in response to the *Enola Gay* controversy and the eventual display of the plane outside of Dulles International Airport in Washington D.C.

Corell, John T., to Monroe Hatch, 10 August 1993. Digital Library, LeHigh University, [http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round1/monroe\\_hatch.PDF](http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round1/monroe_hatch.PDF) (accessed 7 January 2008).

This letter comes from the beginning of the Air Force Association's involvement with the Enola Gay exhibit. It mostly points to a letter by veteran Burr Bennett, saying that there was controversy about the proposed exhibit. This is an important source because it shows how veterans were some of the first people to react to the exhibit and that they worked closely with the Air Force Association.

Correll, John T. to Monroe Hatch, 7 April 1994. "Analysis of Air and Space Museum Script." Transcript from the Air Force Association, <http://www.afa.org/media/enolagay/balance.html> (accessed 7 January 2008).

This is a memo within the Air Force Association which came after John Correll had inspected the exhibit. It outlines every part of the exhibit including how many pictures were given for each topic. Correll describes three main things which he found to be contentious: that the exhibition lacked balance and historical context, that it was designed to play on emotions, and that it depicted U.S. military airpower in a negative way. He is also critical of much of the Ground Zero section of the exhibit and it appears that he would rather have had no mention given to the horrors reeked by the atomic bombs.

Correll, John T. "The Smithsonian Plan for the Enola Gay: A Report on the Revisions." *Air Force Magazine*, 28 June 1994.

In this article Correll summarizes his qualms with various parts of the exhibit; they are similar to his memo written earlier to Monroe Hatch. He was upset about a perceived lack of balance in the exhibit and called for many of the pictures and texts to be removed. He also reiterated that the atomic bombings were a military action which saved lives and that the morality of it should not be questioned. Finally he even criticizes the museum's stance on nuclear deterrence which, in his view, was more than just a theory.

Dichtl, John R. "A Chronology of the Smithsonian's Last Act." *OAH Newsletter* 22 (Nov. 1994): 9-10.

This article contained a copy of the OAH's resolution which stated the organization's opposition to the actions of Congress interfering with the Smithsonian's exhibit.

Eugene L. Meyer, "2 Exhibits To Mark A-Bombings; Enola Gay Flap Results In Scaled-Down Shows," *Washington Post*, 21 June 1995, 1(D).

A quite different article from previous *Post* articles, this author does not criticize the Smithsonian for being sympathetic to the Japanese. On the contrary, the author states that, after the museum scaled back the exhibit, they "...all but eliminated the Japanese perspective." The topic of the article is the exhibit which American University opened to counter the Smithsonian. American University's exhibit worked in cooperation with the museum in Hiroshima and also inherited many of the Ground Zero artifacts which the Smithsonian removed. The article even ends on a rather ironic note concerning the Smithsonian giving tours to various veterans groups and members of Congress; the very people who previously opposed the exhibit. Of course, by this point, the exhibit had been catered to their interests.

Eugene L. Meyer, "A-Bomb Exhibit Takes Another Hit; Academics Blast Revised Script For Beleaguered Smithsonian Show," *Washington Post*, 18 November 1994, 1(F).

This article offers help to constructing a timeline with which to place the events that unfolded around the exhibit. It states that the exhibit was in its fifth version and that it had

already been changed to better please the opposition; in other words, much of the material had been removed. The author then mentions that Smithsonian officials had met with various scholars who had presented another point of view: that the Smithsonian had practiced “historical cleansing.” This is the first mention of the viewpoint of outside scholars in the press.

Eugene L. Meyer, “Smithsonian Stands Firm On A-Bomb Exhibit; Veterans Asked Museum to Cancel Enola Gay Plans,” *Washington Post*, 19 January 1995, 1(C).

Another piece of the timeline puzzle; this article describes veterans groups which were still not pleased with the changes the Smithsonian had made to the exhibit. The author of the article mentions that Smithsonian officials were determined not to make any more changes. In reality, the exhibit would be cancelled shortly after this and when it was re-opened it was drastically scaled back. References to Congressman Blute are also in the article; he is listed as leading the campaign of congress-folk against the exhibit.

Hank Burchard, “Plane Truths During WWI,” *Washington Post*, 22 November 1991, N65.

This article reported on one of the Smithsonian’s earlier exhibits, in this case about World War I. Some of the exhibits prior to the *Enola Gay* were important because they contained some elements which were controversial, yet they were still successfully displayed to the public.

Harwit, Martin. “The Enola Gay.” *Air & Space* 4, 1988  
<http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round1/harwit.pdf> (accessed 28 April 2008).

I only had time to scan this article. However, I included the main point in my timeline; this was that Harwit wrote about the NASM’s intent to display the *Enola Gay* in the near future.

Harwit, Martin, to Hubert R. Dagley, II, 9 January 1994. Digital Library. Lehigh University.  
[http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round3/3\\_010995.pdf](http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round3/3_010995.pdf) (accessed 6 May 2008).

In this letter, Harwit described the predicted number of American casualties in a hypothetical land invasion of Japan, an issue which critics raised again and again during the debate. Harwit described Barton Bernstein’s research which uncovered the number to have been 63,000 and not the much higher numbers which were sometimes described.

Hatch, Jr., Monroe W., to Martin Harwit, 12 September 1993. Transcript from the Air Force Association, <http://www.afa.org/media/enolagay/09-12-93.html> (accessed 7 January 2008).

These were the original complaints of the Air Force Association to the Smithsonian, after they had examined the proposals for the exhibit. Hatch finds fault with the Smithsonian for not giving enough reference to Pearl Harbor or to Japanese aggression in Asia. It is obvious that he was hoping to turn the exhibit into a glorification of World War II and the U.S. military, as both of these events were already mentioned in the exhibit and were supposed to take a back-seat role to the main focus of the exhibit, which was the atomic bombings and the end of World War II.

Heyman, Michael I., "Excerpts from Smithsonian Secretary I. Michael Heyman's Statement at the opening of the Enola Gay exhibit at the National Air & Space Museum." Digital Library. Lehigh University.  
<http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round4/sopeningremarks.pdf> (accessed 6 May 2008).

In this statement Secretary Heyman justified the new exhibit by stating that there were problems with the original exhibit and the way it portrayed American veterans on the anniversary of World War II.

Hutchison, Kay Baily, "Smithsonian Plans an Unworthy Exhibit,"  
<http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round2/congressreleases.PDF> (accessed 7 January 2008).

Another Congressperson disgruntled with the Smithsonian exhibit. Her arguments are rather tired and similar to the rest of the oppositions'; that the bombings saved American lives and that the U.S. played a heroic role in the end of World War II. One interesting point that she touches on, however, is the Smithsonian's use of the phrases "war of vengeance" and "Western imperialism." In my paper I had already suggested that the Smithsonian was mistaken when they termed the war in the Pacific was Western imperialism, and it was one more point that the opposition used while they flung mud at the Smithsonian.

Jacqueline Trescott, "Heyman To Leave Smithsonian," *Washington Post*, 23 January 1999, 1(A).

This article offers some interesting insight into Smithsonian secretary Heyman, along with information on the Smithsonian such as past exhibits and budgets. Accordingly, a large portion of the Smithsonian's budget came from the federal government. The author gives credit to Heyman for cancelling the Enola Gay exhibit and also mentions that he later postponed an exhibit about the Vietnam War.

James Atlas, "Ways to Look at the Past (Or Did It Really Happen?)," *New York Times*, 13 November 1994, 3(4).

The author attempted to clarify the term "revisionist," a term which had been thrown around to describe any historian who attempted to challenge the status quo, or to critically examine what were commonly accepted ideas. I could find no particular bias in the article for or against, however, the author quoted Oscar Wilde about how it is our duty to rewrite history.

Jan Lewis, "History Standards for All Tastes," *New York Times*, 16 March 1995, 24(A).

Jan Lewis, professor of History at Rutgers University, defended the national history standards calling them "tough, intelligent and remarkably mainstream." She also criticizes Lynne Cheney, implying that she was violating some of the fundamental principles of democracy which the United States was founded on.

Jo Thomas, "A New Guideline on History Looks Beyond Old Europe," *New York Times*, 11 November 1994, 1(A).

The author of this article gave a good summary and description of the debate which had been going on about the national history standards. She makes reference to "culture wars" a phrase which was often used by the authors of the book *History Wars* to describe the political atmosphere of the time.

Jo Thomas, "History on the March; New Standards, Attacked on the Right, Stress the Neglected," *New York Times*, 5 April 1995, 1(B).

This was the most descriptive article relating to the national history standards which I could find. Not only did it summarize the events thus far, it also followed specific examples of schools and classrooms which had put the standards into practice. The article mentioned some of the good things the students were able to do with the standards, and some of the thought provoking questions and meaningful learning which they were engaging in.

John McCaslin, "Inside the Beltway," *Washington Times*, 28 March 1994, A9.

This was the first comment by the *Washington Times* on the controversy. It contained the opinions of the AFA but not those of the Smithsonian curators. The article was helpful for my timeline.

Johnathan Yardley, "Dropping a Bomb of an Idea," *Washington Post*, 10 October 1994, 2(B).

Jonathan Yardley's critical article was full of negative language toward the Smithsonian. Furthermore, he used a quote from the exhibit script which was taken slightly out of context. Without offering a good analysis of the Smithsonian's intentions, he jumped to criticize the museum; this must have had some affect on public opinion. Indeed, much of the public remained ignorant of much of the good content which was in the intended exhibit.

Johnson, Sam, "Purpose of Enola Gay Exhibit Disputed," Congressional News Release, 10 August 1994, <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round2/congressreleases.PDF> (accessed 7 January 2008).

This is an important document because, when Congressman Johnson criticizes the Smithsonian, he refers back to the charter which the museum was founded on; its own standards. In Congressman Johnson's opinion, the museum was not living up to one element of the charter which reads, "The valor and sacrificial service of the men and women of the Armed Forces shall be portrayed as an inspiration to the present and future generations of America." It was quite possible that visitors to the Smithsonian exhibit would have walked away not feeling too proud about their country. However, they also would have learned important historical facts and would have learned about the dangers of nuclear war.

Lewis, Tom, "Lewis Disappointed With Smithsonian Director's Explanation of Japanese Bias in Upcoming Exhibit on Atomic Bomb," Congressional News Release, 10 August 1994,

<http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round2/congressreleases.PDF> (accessed 7 January 2008).

In this news release Congressman Lewis releases his extreme shock and displeasure with the Smithsonian. It “glorifies kamikaze pilots” he says, and it is “offensive to veterans.” Lewis’s arguments, however, are based on absolutely no evidence and his reasoning is far from sound. He even seems shocked that NASM director Harwit said that he wouldn’t use atomic weapons in wartime. Does this mean that Congressman Lewis was saying that he would use atomic weapons during war time? Most importantly, he mentions that he would not allow taxpayers’ money to be spent on the exhibit. This is proof, then, of the dedication that some members of Congress had to stopping the exhibit.

Lynne V. Cheney, “History Standards Unsuitable for Schools,” *New York Times*, 30 January 1995, 18(A).

Lynne Cheney was the most vocal opponent of the proposed national history standards. In this letter, she criticized the standards for their coverage of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; an example which was relevant to my paper and which made this article relevant on two different levels.

Moore, David W. “Majority Supports Use of Atomic Bomb on Japan in WWII.” Gallup News Service, 5 August 2005 <http://www.gallup.com/poll/17677/Majority-Supports-Use-Atomic-Bomb-Japan-WWII.aspx> (accessed 3 May 2008).

These were the results of the most recent Gallup poll regarding support among Americans for the atomic bombings. The results also listed results from the same survey, conducted in prior years, including 1995, the final year of the *Enola Gay* controversy.

National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution. Exhibition Planning Document. “Hiroshima and Nagasaki: A Fiftieth Anniversary Exhibit at the National Air and Space Museum.” (1993), <http://www.afa.org/media/enolagay/e93-1.html> (accessed 7 January 2008).

This was the first planning document for the exhibit, given to the Air Force Association, and eventually to the press. It is invaluable because it explains the Smithsonian’s goals for the exhibit and what they hoped visitors would walk away with. The goals seem very reasonable and mild mannered, stating simply that they wish for a “...thoughtful and balanced re-examination of the atomic bombings...” and a hope to understand the “...human suffering experienced by the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.”

National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution. Exhibition Planning Document. “The Crossroads: The End of World War II, the Atomic Bomb, and the Onset of the Cold War.” (July 1993), <http://www.afa.org/media/enolagay/07-93.html> (accessed 7 January 2008).



This was the third planning document and it was considerably longer than the first. It contains a brief description of each proposed section of the exhibit, along with sources and objects which will be used to enhance it. The primary goals of the Smithsonian are listed, as well as mention of the controversies which surround the atomic bombs. It also includes more specific phrases which would be used in the actual exhibit, such as the phrase “war of vengeance.”

National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution. “The Crossroads: The End of World War II, the Atomic Bomb, and the Onset of the Cold War.” Digital Library, LeHigh University, <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/crossroads/crossroadsoutline.html> (accessed 7 January 2008).

This is the original draft of the Smithsonian exhibit, before any of the opposition’s proposed changes had been implemented; it was the exhibit done the way the Smithsonian wanted it to be. This source will be helpful in determining whether or not the opposition’s arguments were justified and what they were based on. Furthermore, it will be very useful when compared with the final draft that the Smithsonian had used, after it had scaled back the exhibit and removed much of the text and many artifacts. By doing this, I hope to show whether or not the Smithsonian censored history. Many scholars who have written on the subject have already claimed that the Smithsonian did do this, and I hope to verify and add to their understanding of the subject.

National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution. “The Last Act: The Atomic Bomb and the End of World War II.” <http://www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/key-issues/nuclear-weapons/history/post-cold-war/smithsonian-controversy/index.htm> (accessed 13 January 2008).

This is the final draft of the *Enola Gay* exhibit. It is valuable, especially when compared with the original draft. By this comparison, it is possible to glean what final effects the Smithsonian’s opposition had. New sections were added describing the War in the Pacific. Many sections were also removed; those being what the critics found to be unacceptable with their point of view.

Neufeld, Michael J., to Paul Metro, 3 February 1994. Digital Library, Lehigh University, [http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round1/monroe\\_hatch.PDF](http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round1/monroe_hatch.PDF) (accessed 7 January 2008).

This is a letter from Smithsonian curator Michael Neufeld to Paul Metro, who was representing veterans’ interests at the time. Neufeld states that due attention will be given to the veterans’ viewpoint, as well as the viewpoints of others. As it turned out, showing “other viewpoints” came to be hotly contested by various veterans and the Air Force Association as they attempted to paint a one-sided view of history and World War II.

Nicks, Ben. “Keep Moralizing out of Museums.” *Air & Space*. December 1990/January 1991, 8 <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round1/Nicks.pdf> (accessed 28 April 2008).



This author expressed criticism of the Smithsonian's exhibit on the history of strategic bombing. He was also concerned about how the *Enola Gay* was going to be displayed in the future exhibit. I used this as an early example of the debate which was already taking place while the exhibit was being discussed. Reference to this source was made in my timeline of events.

Nobile, Philip, ed. With an afterword by Barton J. Bernstein. *Judgment at the Smithsonian*. New York: Marlowe & Company, 1995.

Most of the pages of this book are dedicated to the full original script of the *Enola Gay* exhibit written by the curators at the National Air and Space Museum. This is most likely the only publication of the original script and the beginning pages mention that it is unauthorized. This was the exhibit done the way the Smithsonian wanted it to be.

The script will be helpful in determining whether or not the oppositions' arguments were justified and what they were based on. Furthermore, it will be very useful when compared with the final draft that the Smithsonian used, after it scaled back the exhibit and removed much of the text and many artifacts. By doing this, I hope to show whether or not the Smithsonian censored history. Many scholars, including the authors of this book, have already claimed that the Smithsonian did do this, and I hope to verify and add to their understanding of the subject.

Barton Bernstein, a professor of history at Stanford University, offers the afterword. He was a leading figure against the "historical cleansing" which took place at the Smithsonian, and along with other scholars, petitioned for the exhibit to be changed back to the way the original script was. His own view is that the exhibit script was "a respectable piece of written history overall." (p. xv)

Rowan Scarborough, "Smithsonian boss scoffs at rumors GOP rules exhibits; Heyman moves against negativism," *Washington Times*, 9 May 1995, A6.

This article described Senator Sam Johnson's recent appointment as a regent of the Smithsonian museum. He was a critic of the original exhibit and it's more than likely that he worked to change it once he obtained this position.

"Smithsonian's Budget Reduced by \$2.2 Million," *Washington Times*, 9 February 1994, C17.

I used this source for the timeline, to help express another factor that the Smithsonian was facing during the controversy.

Smithsonian Institution. Smithsonian Archives. "A Collection of Comment Cards Left by Visitors to the Enola Gay Exhibit at the National Air and Space Museum." Digital Library, Lehigh University  
<http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round4/commentcards.pdf> (accessed 6 May 2008).

These comment cards were very interesting to read. They gave a glimpse at what visitors to the re-done exhibit were thinking as they left. I used one comment card for this paper to show one of the consequences of the *Enola Gay* exhibit being changed.

Smithsonian Institution. "Fiscal Year 2008 Budget Request to Congress."

<http://www.si.edu/about/budget/2008/01%20-%20Congressional%20Overview%20FY%202008.pdf> (accessed 4 March 2008).

I used this as a recent example of how much funding the Smithsonian receives from Congress. During the controversy, many members of Congress were opposed to how the museum was handling the *Enola Gay* exhibit, and some Senators and Congressmen used the threatened to decrease the Smithsonian's if certain changes weren't made.

Theisen, Bruce, to The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton, 12 August 1994. Digital Library. Lehigh University. <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round2/alclinton.pdf> (accessed 6 May 2008).

I used this letter as an example of the influence which the American Legion had. They would not have written the President if they felt their arguments would not be acted upon. They wanted something done, had a specific plan, and were willing to appeal to the highest power to obtain their goals.

U.S. Congress. House. *Statement of Congressman Peter Blute (R-MA 03) on Changes to Enola Gay Exhibit Announced by National Air and Space Museum*. 29 August 1994, <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round2/congressreleases.PDF> (accessed 7 January 2008).

True to his word, Congressman Blute took the issue of the exhibit up with Congress, expressing his gripes to them. He called for a "major overhaul" of the exhibit and mentions that the Smithsonian will need "...more than window dressing if they want to get Congress, veterans, and historians interested in a fair exhibit off their back." The power of this quote shows the distance that Blute was willing to go to change the exhibit.

U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Rules and Administration. *The Smithsonian Institution: Management Guidelines for the Future*. Hearings before the Committee on Rules and Administration. 104<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 11 May 1995. Printing Office.

These were guidelines laid out by Congress for the Smithsonian. Special attention was given to the museum's budget and future direction in relation to the *Enola Gay* exhibit.

U.S. Congress. Senate. *Senate Resolution 257 – Relating to the "Enola Gay" Exhibit*. Congressional Record. September 1994, vol. 140, no. 131, <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/enola/files/round2/res257.pdf> (accessed 6 May 2008).

This was a non-binding resolution submitted by Sen. Kassebaum. The resolution stated that the Smithsonian should honor veterans and reflect a positive picture of the United States.

### Wisconsin Newspapers

- “A-bomb exhibit reopens old wounds,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 8 February 1995, 12(Letters).
- “Blanding down the A-bomb story,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 1 February 1995, 10(Editorial).
- Boyd Andersen, “End bomb debate,” *The Leader-Telegram*, 10 February 1995, editorial.
- Chuck Rupnow, “Elmwood man a witness to MacArthur’s famous return,” *The Leader-Telegram*, 30 September 1995.
- “Components of Exhibit,” *Wisconsin State Journal*, 24 December 1995, Forum 1(B).
- Conwall O. Hanson, “Battle recalled,” *The Leader-Telegram*, 14 March 1995, editorial.
- Cris Peterson, “Books help children understand legacy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki,” *The Leader-Telegram*, 9 August 1995.
- David G. Brenzel, “American Pows Favored Dropping The Bomb,” *Wisconsin State Journal*, 23 March 1995, Opinion, 15(A).
- David Walton, “50 years later, A-bomb issues still heated, divisive,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 11 August 1996, 11(All Edition).
- Donald A. Mercier, “Biased anchor,” *The Leader-Telegram*, 12 August 1995, editorial.
- Donald M. Board, “Revising History,” *The Leader-Telegram*, 7 March 1995, editorial.
- Eileen Lockwood, “Town that launched atomic age lives in serenity 50 years later, Los Alamos’ beautiful scenery and peaceful setting belie its once-momentous mission,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 6 August 1995, 3(H).
- Ernst-Ulrich Franzen, “How we learned to fear the future,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 6 August 1995, 7(E).
- Ernst-Ulrich Franzen, “Veteran of deadly Tokyo bombing raid cannot forget the devastation Pewaukee Lake man flew 36 missions as B-29 co-pilot in WWII,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 26 May 1995, 1(AU).
- “Enola Gay legacy: No bombs since Hiroshima, Nagasaki,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 24 January 1995, 8(News).
- Frank Duesler, “Do Smithsonian Curators Meet Competency Test?” *Wisconsin State Journal*, 10 February 1995, Opinion, 11(A).

George L. Bridwell, "Let Enola Gay Tell The Patriotic Truth," *Wisconsin State Journal*, 3 February 1995, Opinion, 9(A).

"Hiroshima Display Angers Wwii Vets," *Wisconsin State Journal*, 18 November 1995, Local/Wisconsin, 3(B).

"History Could Use Change," *Wisconsin State Journal*, 6 February 1995, Opinion, 5(A).

J. Birney Dibble, "It Seems to Me: Bomb brought quick end to vicious war," *The Leader-Telegram*, 13 October 1995.

John La Farge, "Bomb not needed," *The Leader-Telegram*, 10 August 1995, editorial.

John Nichols, "Fifty Years Ago This Week," *Capital Times*, 7 August 1995, 1(C).

John Patrick Hunter, "Smithsonian Should Drop Bomb Exhibit," *Capital Times*, 1 September 1994, editorial, 13(A).

Julian Emerson, "Nurse recalls end of war," *The Leader-Telegram*, 2 September 1995.

L. Landgraf, "Japanese Never Repented For War," *Capital Times*, 4 March 1995, editorial, 11(A).

"Let's Face A-Bomb Honestly," *Capital Times*, 7 August 1995, editorial, 3(C).

Lou Recine, "Bomb a crime," *The Leader-Telegram*, 16 August 1995, editorial.

Paul Nagel, "Apologize?," *The Leader-Telegram*, 15 February 1995, editorial.

Phil Brinkman, "You Supply History At Enola Gay Exhibit," *Wisconsin State Journal*, 6 August 1995, Opinion, 2(B).

"Pseudo-History Serves No One," *Capital Times*, 1 February 1995, editorial, 7(A).

Richard Foster, "It's time to own up to our part of horror," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 30 July 1995, 1(J).

Richard S. Russell, "Truman Was Product Of Times," *Capital Times*, 18 March 1995, editorial, 13(A).

Roger A. Gribble, "Enola Gay Stirred Heat Long After A-Bomb," *Wisconsin State Journal*, 24 December 1995, Forum, 1(B).

Sam Martino, "Recalling Hiroshima With sorrow comes hope Victims mourned, messages of peace sent," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 7 August 1995, 1(Metro Edition).

"Smithsonian Shows Arrogance," *Wisconsin State Journal*, 24 January 1995, Opinion, 7(A).

Sol Remer, "Different view," *The Leader-Telegram*, 23 March 1995, editorial.

Stanley K. Kutler, "It's Common For Us To Revise History To Suit Our Beliefs," *Capital Times*, 5 June 1995, editorial, 2(C).

Vernon E. Andersen, "Never forget," *The Leader-Telegram*, 10 March 1995, editorial.

Wayne R. Atkins, "Bomb saved lives," *The Leader-Telegram*, 9 October 1994, editorial.

William E. Carroll, "Right decision," *The Leader-Telegram*, 25 September 1995, editorial.

These Wisconsin newspaper articles and editorials were incredibly helpful in helping me understand how residents of the state felt about the Smithsonian – *Enola Gay* exhibit and about the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well. I used articles from the *Capital Times* and *Wisconsin State Journal* in Madison, the *Leader Telegram* in Eau Claire, and the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* in Milwaukee. Many of these articles were available online, but were accessible only with public library membership of those respective cities; my friends, residents of those cities respectively, assisted me with this.

I was able to compare opinions of people and writers from the various cities and to formulate some overall opinions of the respective newspapers. It was especially interesting to learn about the diverse range of people who live in the great state of Wisconsin. Many veterans, some who had served quite high in the military such as John Patrick Hunter of Madison, for example, and others who were B-29 pilots wrote in their opinions and impressions of World War II.

## Secondary Sources

Alperowitz, Gar. *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*. Vintage Books: New York, 1993.

The curators who worked on the *Enola Gay* exhibit benefited from Alperowitz's research, among others. Along with this book, Alperowitz's *Atomic Diplomacy: Potsdam and Hiroshima* was an important publication in the fields of history, politics, and nuclear issues. This lengthy book details how U.S. and Allied leaders dealt with the coming defeat of Japan during World War II. Alperowitz uses government sources and letters to explain to the reader that there were alternatives to using the bomb, which the Allies knew about, and which might not have involved the massive land invasion that some believed was inevitable.

Bernstein, Barton J. "Misconceived patriotism: the Smithsonian's critics should have defended freedom rather than censorship." *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 51, no. 3 (1995): 4.

Bernstein is a well established writer, historian, and professor at Stanford University. He has also published books relating to nuclear issues and the atomic bombs. In this article he criticizes the Smithsonian for giving into the pressure of the Air Force and the American Legion. He briefly picks apart the flaws in the opposition's arguments and reiterates that the bombing was and is a moral dilemma. His argument also touches on the large amount of Federal funding which the Smithsonian receives.

Harwit, Martin. *An Exhibit Denied: Lobbying the History of Enola Gay*. New York: Copernicus, 1996.

Former National Air and Space director Martin Harwit wrote this book after he had resigned his position in 1995. The intense pressure from critics forced him to resign. Harwit has a unique background, coming from Eastern Europe during World War II, and has witnessed atomic testing in the Pacific. In this book he shares his wisdom and experience by describing the events surrounding the *Enola Gay*, the atomic bombings, and the end of World War II. By including copies of letters, memos, and Congressional documents, he supports his story quite well. Furthermore, he includes information from the exhibit, which ultimately never happened. Although, as of yet, I have read just the introduction of this lengthy book, I know it will be an invaluable source to my research, as it comes from an individual who was at the forefront of the *Enola Gay* controversy, and bore much of the criticism as well.

Lanouette, William. "Reason and Circumstances of the Hiroshima Bomb," [http://www.hiroshimacommittee.org/Background\\_ReasonAndCircumstance.htm](http://www.hiroshimacommittee.org/Background_ReasonAndCircumstance.htm) (accessed 29 April 2008).

I discovered this source later in my research but it was very helpful in clarifying my sections on the historiography of Hiroshima discussion. It also helped me identify two books of previous research which were summarized; I was able to use this for my timeline.

Linenthal, Edward T. "Struggling with History and Memory." *The Journal of American History* 82, no. 3 (1995): 1094-1101.

This was another article amongst a series of discussions that took place in this journal. I used this and another article by David Thelen which I also cited here. Linenthal was critical of the Smithsonian's critics and concerned about the amount of power the government could exercise over museums.

Linenthal, Edward T. and Tom Engelhardt, eds. *History Wars: The Enola Gay and Other Battles for the American Past*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1996.

This book is an invaluable source which puts the events of the Smithsonian *Enola Gay* exhibit in the larger context of battles which have occurred over the ownership of America's past. To do this, the editors rely on the help of multiple authors, each with different view points.

Linenthal himself was on the advisory committee for the *Enola Gay* exhibit and his knowledge and relationship to the topic are very important. He carefully examines the different viewpoints of scholars, veterans, and the Air Force Association arriving at the conclusion that the atomic bombings were a part of America's past which many hoped to forget about, part of a darker narrative of American history. He writes "That darker narrative – particularly when applied to the 'Good War' – seemed to tap into deeper fears about whether or not the United States was a righteous and innocent nation. For many, even to allow mention of the ambiguities and darkneses in our country's history appeared a dangerous activity."

Contributing author John Dower briefly explains Japanese aggression in Asia, a topic which many of the Smithsonian's critics felt was not explained thoroughly enough in the exhibit. He goes on to explain the concept of victim consciousness, which included forgetfulness of Japanese aggression in light of their suffering. However, this is followed up by the concept of victimizer consciousness, which is the idea that one could have been both victim and victimizer. Dower continues that this concept has been embraced by the Japanese, one of the losers in World War II, but is largely ignored in America, a victor in the War. Without the possibility of being both victim and victimizer, it was difficult for some of the American public and the Smithsonian's critics to resign to pictures, testimonials, and artifacts which were in the Ground Zero display of the *Enola Gay* exhibit.

Nash, Gary, Charlotte Crabtree, and Ross E. Dunn. *History on Trial: Culture Wars and the Teaching of the Past*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997.

This book was written by scholars who had been involved with the debates over the National History Standards. By using this, I could connect those debates with the *Enola Gay* controversy and draw on similarities and differences between them. Particularly helpful for my research were the sections which described how the standards related to the atomic bombings and how Congress voted against the standards at one point.

Nemecek, Sasha. "Putting Bombs Away." *Scientific American* 273, no. 2 (1995): 26-27.

This journal article offers a brief analysis of the events surrounding the *Enola Gay* exhibit. The other claims that the Smithsonian should have brought opposition groups into the planning

process earlier to avoid much of the problems they experienced. She also mentions that it was because of fundamental differences in opinion toward nuclear weapons that there was disagreement between groups in the first place, a hypothesis which I as well propose in my paper. Finally, she concludes by agreeing with other scholars, that the Smithsonian's final version of the exhibit was "wholly inadequate."

Nobile, Philip, ed. With an afterword by Barton J. Bernstein. *Judgment at the Smithsonian*. New York: Marlowe & Company, 1995.

Most of the pages of this book are dedicated to the full original script of the *Enola Gay* exhibit written by the curators at the National Air and Space Museum. This is most likely the only publication of the original script and the beginning pages mention that it is unauthorized. This was the exhibit done the way the Smithsonian wanted it to be.

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Thelen, David. "History after the Enola Gay Controversy: An Introduction." *The Journal of American History* 82, no. 3 (1995): 1029-1035.

This was one article amongst a series of articles and discussions centering around the Smithsonian – *Enola Gay* controversy. I used this article to help understand some of the consequences of the controversy, especially for the field of history. The author also supports the opinion of the Smithsonian's first draft of the script being well researched and a good piece of history.