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History Held Hostage: Learned Lesson from the Conflict over the Smithsonian Institute Enola Gay Exhibit

Abstract

Excerpt

This paper presents findings from a two year field research project focusing on the public conflict that erupted over the *Enola Gay* exhibit at the National Air and Space Museum (NASM). This conflict did not end with people reaching consensus, ceremoniously signing documents, shaking hands and piling accolades upon one another for solving a serious problem. It can more accurately be described as a stalemate and ultimately a lose-lose proposition even in light of the many opportunities that arose that could have produced at least a partial if not total agreement. The reason for studying this "failed" public conflict is to point out the major benefits that such cases have in regard to our understanding of the factors, dynamics and observable patterns that are endemic of many types of public conflicts. In fact, it makes sense for scholars of conflict resolution to place as much emphasis on what works and what does not—for we ultimately learn more from mistakes than we do from success. I contend that as conflict scholars and practitioners, we have deliberately done ourselves and the public a great disservice by ignoring cases like the *Enola Gay*. This paper is not about failure but about the hidden riches of information, knowledge and wisdom we can gain from a critical examination of less than perfect cases. As conflict specialists, we do not have to be pressured to live in a world of the "thrill of victory or the agony of defeat" if we learn to accept the assumption I make here that there is likely more to be learned from so called "failed" public conflicts than from those that are deemed "normal" cases. Ironically, once a form of conflict intervention becomes normal or predictable it is likely to receive even less critical examination. We are, then, stuck with a paradox of thinking like naive empiricists, wherein we ignore the obvious and shun the uncomfortable, leaving us in no better a position than if we had done nothing at all. So here, I examine a supposedly uncomfortable, unpredictable, uncontrollable and uncertain public conflict to demonstrate analytically that it is none of these.

Keywords: *affect theory, atomic bomber, conflict resolution, Enola Gay exhibit, Hiroshima (Japan), National Air and Space Museum (NASM)*

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**HISTORY HELD HOSTAGE:
LEARNED LESSONS FROM THE CONFLICT OVER THE
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE'S *ENOLA GAY* EXHIBIT**

Brian Polkinghorn

This paper presents findings from a two year field research project focusing on the public conflict that erupted over the *Enola Gay* exhibit at the National Air and Space Museum (NASM). This conflict did not end with people reaching consensus, ceremoniously signing documents, shaking hands and piling accolades upon one another for solving a serious problem. It can more accurately be described as a stalemate and ultimately a lose-lose proposition even in light of the many opportunities that arose that could have produced at least a partial if not total agreement. The reason for studying this "failed" public conflict is to point out the major benefits that such cases have in regard to our understanding of the factors, dynamics and observable patterns that are endemic of many types of public conflicts. In fact, it makes sense for scholars of conflict resolution to place as much emphasis on what works and what does not--for we ultimately learn more from mistakes than we do from success. I contend that as conflict scholars and practitioners, we have deliberately done ourselves and the public a great disservice by ignoring cases like the *Enola Gay*. This paper is not about failure but about the hidden riches of information, knowledge and wisdom we can gain from a critical examination of less than perfect cases. As conflict specialists, we do not have to be pressured to live in a world of the "thrill of victory or the agony of defeat" if we learn to accept the assumption I make here that there is likely more to be learned from so called "failed" public conflicts than from those that are deemed "normal" cases. Ironically, once a form of conflict intervention becomes normal or predictable it is likely to receive even less critical examination. We are, then, stuck with a paradox of thinking like naive empiricists, wherein we ignore the obvious and shun the uncomfortable, leaving us in no better a position than if we had done nothing at all. So here, I examine a supposedly uncomfortable, unpredictable, uncontrollable and uncertain public conflict to demonstrate analytically that it is none of these.

How the *Enola Gay* exhibit was transformed from what was anticipated by many to be a world class presentation to its present state is the focus of this paper. First, a conceptual framework is developed in which to filter process and substantive issues. This is followed by a presentation of the history of the case. I then examine how the Smithsonian constructs exhibits from a decision making and public participation perspective. From this, the focus shifts to an examination of basic disagreements relating to the framing of the exhibit's substantive scope via its "time line" as well as to areas where stakeholders agreed to the existence of facts but not necessarily their interpretation and meaning. The discussion then orders stakeholders fundamental differences into dichotomous categories that fall on a number of continua. From this we can learn how a conflict

like this can be managed more effectively from an analytical, process and substantive perspective.

Conceptual Framework

The events surrounding the *Enola Gay* exhibit are conceptually similar to many public conflicts in that most of what is known by the public is shaped by media attention to human interest aspects such as: personality clashes, debates over data or exciting and dynamic interactions. Although they are generally accurate, on the most basic of levels, almost all lack a developed sense of knowledge or a conceptual framework within which to analyze the events, dynamics and issues that comprise the conflict. Even primary stakeholders in the conflict have written articles and books on the subject but they too have tended to focus on the same components as that of the popular press and do not provide any new means of analysis.

The conceptual framework being presented here focuses on the different means of conflicting based what on what might be called a tangible to intangible continuum. It is meant to focus attention on the cognitive approaches stakeholders adopt as well as the accompanying behavioral and affective means needed to achieve their goals. At the most tangible level are the pieces of raw data and information that people use to construct arguments that bolster their positions. This means of conflicting is often couched in rational thought that focuses stakeholders on legitimate, justifiable and sometimes moral means of persuasion. Such data include memos, reports or records of events. Underlying these data are stakeholder's positions that are largely a function of political orientation, socialization and affective components. Underlying the data and positions are the interests of the stakeholders. As conflict scholars and practitioners typically attest, a focus on interests is one likely means to predictably alter the conflict dynamics and perhaps move people off so called intractable positions toward a solution.

However, I argue in this case study that when the affective component is sufficiently strong and intangibles become more prominent, it is often difficult to reframe issues and subsequently move stakeholders from positions. Even more interesting is the tendency seen in this case that, when stakeholders gain the sense that they are not persuading primary decision makers or other stakeholders, they will resort to their own reframing of issues in such a way that personal beliefs and values become the preferred means of expression. As stakeholders continue to express themselves using language that symbolically reflects their beliefs, values, and oftentimes their basic human needs, it becomes more difficult to explore the creation of common ground. On the contrary, oftentimes a sense of dissensus develops along with a series of conflict cleavages or areas of focus where stakeholders know they are not in agreement. This reversal in fortune is important to study conceptually because it lends evidence to our theory construction on how conflicts escalate. It also allows us to further test our conceptual frameworks to determine their accuracy and ability to predict when other conflicts with similar conceptual characteristics will likely turn in the same direction.

In the *Enola Gay* conflict there are stakeholders who hold fundamentally different beliefs about the US military, the development and subsequent use of atomic weapons and what post *Enola Gay* atomic diplomacy means. Many also hold fundamentally different values as to the utility of war. Yet, even though they hold fundamentally different beliefs, values and needs, they do not necessarily have to compete amongst one another in determining the scope, theme and composition of the exhibit. What is being argued here is that two fundamental conceptual mistakes were made that could have been easily managed procedurally and thus helped to create a powerful exhibit. The first relates to focus. Decision makers adopted the underlying notion that conflict has a tendency to be unproductive or destructive and therefore should be avoided or completely controlled. This narrowed the process choices considerably. The second is a result of the first and relates to substance. The material that arose during the conflict is rich in description and inference. Although not completely agreed upon, it enhances the overall central theme. Unfortunately, many took the distributive stance that one interpretation was to prevail over the other even though some combination of both would likely have produced an excellent central theme of the exhibit. The opposite and contemporary approach to shunning value laden conflicts unfortunately prevailed leaving stakeholders frustrated.

One transmutation that will become readily apparent in the present analysis is an utmost need by many stakeholders to couch their beliefs and values in data discussions. Stakeholders have even gone so far as attempt to invalidate, delegitimize or seek to speculate on the reliability of others' supporting data. This may be predicted if we recognize that tangible data are more readily negotiable than intangible beliefs and values. How does this translate into better theory construction and practice? First, contemporary theories of conflict that inform process considerations typically work off the hypothesis that it is "productive" in achieving a "positive" end result to move stakeholders away from their positions. This is understandable when one realizes that position based public conflicts can typically be characterized by an enhanced ability to inundate and saturate discussion into what I call "data wars." This is where people become focused on infinitesimal aspects of data debating while missing the larger picture. While agree that "data wars" supply only limited amounts and types of information and knowledge used to construct common ground, perhaps it is necessary to *deliberately* reframe the discussion onto stakeholder values. This is risky but gets right to the point of contention.

Second, contemporary theories also tend to suggest that it is wise to move stakeholders away from discussions that directly connect to belief structures, value systems and access to the fulfillment of basic human needs. However, I contend that the overriding need to keep people focused on interests may in some instances actually be distracting the intervention practice for the sake of reaching agreement. At the sake of increasing the level of risk, we might focus on identifying and working with the extremely tough sources of conflict that are often found in belief structures, values systems and basic human needs. By deliberately focusing on beliefs, values and the fulfillment of basic human needs the intervenor increases the risk of reaching impasse. Yet it may also clarify for everyone where common ground and conflict cleavages lie.

This case study directly challenges the prevailing literature that supports the philosophy that we should not attempt to intervene in conflicts that are being expressed in terms of beliefs or values. To do this we must remove unrealistic constraints placed on intervenors that place an emphasis on reaching agreement and to see the value of partial agreements or even failures to reach

agreement. This case study also directly confronts the notion of chunking, reframing or transmutating values into interests. The missed opportunities that come from not focusing in on the substance of a value based conflict obviously needs to be balanced against substantive impasse or process breakdown. Yet, the author suggests that in cases such as the *Enola Gay*, not only are value differences the mainstay of the conflict, but also the ground upon which a solution based on value clarification can be built. Therefore, this paper provides an analysis that strongly suggests that we need to review the level of risk we are willing to take to explore value induced conflict and not to completely capitulate once values become the primary means of conflicting.

History of the Case

Between late 1993 and early 1995, the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum (NASM), the most visited museum in the world, undertook an elaborate plan to construct an exhibit commemorating the *Enola Gay*. This modified light weight B-29 "Flying Fortress" was the worlds first pressurized high altitude atomic bomber. For its historic flight on August 6, 1945 the *Enola Gay* dropped, at 8:15:17 AM local time, a "special" bomb called "Little Boy"--the worlds first atomic *weapon*--on the militarized city of Hiroshima Japan. Forty-three seconds later, the bomb detonated with the force of 15,000 pounds of TNT 580 meters above ground to create the maximum destructive impact. At ground zero, or the point directly below the detonation, the temperature rose almost instantly to 5400 degree Fahrenheit or as hot as the surface of the sun (Gup, 1995). From the explosion and ensuing fire storms 80,000 men women and children died along with 23 American prisoners of war and thousands of Korean war slaves. The accounts of the bombing from people at ground zero depict unbearable and horrific conditions (e.g. Buruma, 1994; Hersey, 1946).

This precise moment in time not only drastically accelerated the process of ending the war in the Pacific, it simultaneously ushered in the age of nuclear weapons that generated secondary phenomenon such as diplomatic blackmail, theories calling on mutually assured destruction, an overwhelming fear of Armageddon, a new superpower status and a division of the world into two political camps. This single event, unlike most, poses so many alternative interpretations and subsequent meanings that it is understandable that a serious conflict arose over what the exhibit was going to focus on, what artifacts were going to be collected and displayed, and what overt and latent messages it was intended to send.

Naturally, any exhibit commemorating such a moment in history can be expected to create controversy. Once the exhibit was negotiated into its fifth and final scripted form, its size and layout would have been the largest and most elaborate in NASM history, eventually consuming 10,000 square feet of space and thousands of artifacts dedicated to it. This is indicative of the seriousness placed on the *Enola Gay's* impact on world history. However, the NASM realizing that the fiftieth anniversary of the bombing is important in the sense of planning and timing of its opening missed a more important aspect of such an anniversary that seriously impeded their ability to bring the exhibit to the public. More importantly, NASM officials missed the

psychological impact that a fiftieth anniversary has on the public and more specifically those who witnessed the events surrounding the atomic bombings first hand or even lived through that period of history. Such an anniversary is a uniquely special time in that this is perhaps the last chance where large groups of individuals who took part in or lived through the war could collectively retell their stories before it is lost to the pages of history. This is also a critically important time on a grander social scale for younger generations to listen and learn from these people for essentially the last time. However, the lessons from this senior group of Americans was lost from our collective conscious due to the politics surrounding the conflict over how the exhibit was to be designed. In essence, the Smithsonian awkwardly and ineffectively moved to accommodate various interpretations and accounts of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and essentially missed the importance of this last chance testimony of living witnesses. This is not a criticism of inclusiveness, rather an indication that NASM did not appear to appreciate the seriousness of first hand accounts. Although others have written about this conflict few focus on the decision making process as it relates to people who lived through this historical event (e.g. Nobile, 1995; White, 1995).

The conflict over the exhibit erupted when a docent and retired Air Force officer Frank Rabbit found a copy of the original script. From January 1994 through the decision by Secretary Heyman to down size the exhibit numerous groups sought to influence the content and focus of the exhibit. The title of the first draft was appropriately named "The Crossroads: The End of World War II, The Atomic Bomb and the Origins of the Cold War" which has little to do with the *Enola Gay* or the end of the Second World War. The process by which exhibits are produced will be discussed shortly. Suffice it to say that the events leading up to this first draft were highly irregular and suspect to a number of theories relating to overt injections of personal political perspectives of lead curator Dr. Michael Neufeld, second curator Dr. Tom Crouch and Director of the Museum Dr. Martin Harwit at the expense of a fair representation of events. Many of the overtly political segments received huge press coverage, and at last count, the author has articles from 346 newspapers in the United States alone. The exhibit's eventual title became "The Last Act: The Atomic Bomb and the End of World War II" which captures the *Enola Gay* mission with regard to the end of the war and not the post-war nuclear er--even though NASM included post World War II as a part of the exhibit after serious discussions with peace groups.

All of these titles are somewhat misleading because in personal interviews with Smithsonian officials and reviewing internal memos the main focus and intention of the exhibit is to highlight the *Enola Gay*. However, the *Enola Gay* does not appear in any of the draft script titles. Being a premiere museum that houses air and space artifacts, it makes sense that any exhibit NASM develops should have some focus on either air and space accomplishments and or technological milestones. Indeed, the major focal point of the exhibit is the forward fuselage of the plane itself.

NASM officials took a variety of approaches in designing the exhibit's general focus to include six distinct sections (000,100, 200... 500). Section 000 was added as a new opening to the exhibit late in the conflict to pacify veterans groups who demanded an accurate historical context be presented that clearly and unambiguously articulated the justification for the *Enola Gay* and the Atomic Bomb. This new opening changed the time line of the original script from a few months before the close of the war to a discussion of Japanese expansionism and "naked aggression" of the 1930s. Section 100 depicts some of the military campaigns leading up to the Allied invasion

of the home islands. Section 200 explains how the bomb was conceived and how the decision to drop the bomb was made. Section 300 originally focused on Japanese defense of the home islands, how Kamikaze's were glorified and what the people of Japan were willing to endure to protect the Emperor and save the country. The last version changed the focus of Section 300 to attend to the technological challenges of building the *Enola Gay* and literally a new Air Force. Section 300 also displays a forward section of the *Enola Gay* fuselage. Section 400 was the most controversial because its main focus of dropping the bomb originally came from the perspective of the people on the ground. Toward the end of the conflict, NASM felt pressured to add a Section 500 to focus on the "American perspective" of the bombing, reinforcing the military and other critics who held that the exhibit had been decidedly anti-American. In particular, the last two sections are the major components of contention. Over approximately a nine month period, stakeholders applied pressure on the NASM administration to make changes in the exhibit's draft script language, accompanying artifacts and set design in all areas, but particularly these last two.

On January 30, 1995 the Smithsonian Board met and Secretary Heyman brought the "atomic bomb" exhibit up for discussion. There was no vote, by the board to scrap the exhibit, as the press reported. Secretary Heyman personally made the decision after listening to the concerns of the Board. The Board merely advises the Secretary on matters but neither it nor even the President can force the Smithsonian Secretary to make decisions to cancel an exhibit. In actuality, the board had bipartisan support in favor of the exhibit proceeding as planned. Heyman's idea of "replacing" it was a completely unprecedented move. In a letter to Congressman Ralph Hall, Secretary I. Michael Heyman wrote on January 30, 1995 "He [Speaker Gingrich] joins me in reporting, with delight, that we have resolved the Enola Gay controversy to practically everyone's satisfaction." Likewise in a letter to Congressman Bill Zeff dated February 1, 1995 Congressmen Johnson, Blute and Livingston wrote "Looking back at where this exhibit was one year ago, we feel strongly that this is a great victory, not just for the veterans who fought in World War II, but for all Americans."

In the end, what had been planned as a monumental exhibit by a world class museum became nothing more than a minimalist display composed of the forward fuselage of the *Enola Gay*, a small plaque and a short video of the crew. The NASM had become so politically attacked that instead of responding to external pressures, they could only passively react leading to the rather atrophied and inadequate display. This is a classic case of defensive decision making and problem solving--one we can learn a great deal in regards to collaborative processes and the management of value laden conflict. Rather than collaborate to expand the pie and present historical facts and perspectives in a larger frame, Smithsonian officials designed an atmosphere that created an ineffective decision making process that encouraged a distributive or fixed sum mentality, divisive partisan political pressures, undeserved wedges between groups, an intolerable sense of institutional seclusion, an inadequate exchange of information, the resorting to the issuance of threats, deliberate strategic deception and outright critical personal attacks. The remainder of this article reviews how this unfolded and what conflict scholars and practitioners can learn from this experience.

How the Exhibit was Originally Conceived

The controversy surrounding the manipulation of the originally conceived plans for the exhibit has been and continues to be a national and international phenomenon in which a variety of stakeholders have accused each other of being terribly stubborn, revisionist, unrealistic and incapable of seeing the *Enola Gay* and the atomic bomb in its "proper historical context." Peace activists trained in conflict resolution, military personnel trained in team work, clergy who often play a stabilizing role in social conflict by appealing to common themes in the moral collective conscious of groups, and Smithsonian personnel who focus on presenting collectively held ideas over personal politics all seem to have somehow, either through their own doing or by a series of well timed events, come to interact in less than effective ways.

The conflict over the exhibit's theme and contents clearly exposes the lack of understanding by members of the public, as well as Smithsonian officials, about the exhibit's overall focus. For instance, some view the exhibit as a commemoration of the end of World War II while others see it as a glorification of militarism as well as a legitimization of the use of nuclear weapons. Others see it as the moment Armageddon became possible. In actuality, the exhibit design focused around the *Enola Gay* and the consequences of its historic mission. These competing perceptions of the exhibit's focus are, ironically, actually segments of the overall information and knowledge that originally comprised the exhibit's material. So part of the conflict also deals with the emphasis on information that the stakeholders agree should be included in the exhibit.

Most stakeholders agree that the *Enola Gay* should be at least one focus of the exhibit. Indeed, the forward fuselage of the *Enola Gay* was always an artifact in each version of the script. From an aeronautical perspective, some NASM officials view the *Enola Gay* as one of a select few aircraft that have dramatically changed the nature of human existence and world affairs. Participants from the military and Smithsonian believe other planes in this category include the *Wright Flyer* and *The Spirit of Saint Louis*. Each has had a lasting impact on how we view airplanes and the ability to both positively and negatively narrow large times and distances between people around the globe.

Not one stakeholder thought the *Enola Gay* should be excluded from the exhibit but for extremely divergent reasons. For some, the symbolic influence of the *Enola Gay* on world politics is without rival. As a "vehicle" it ushered in some of the most profound changes in international power relations. The *Enola Gay* symbolizes the rearrangement of the international "pecking order" of countries vying for international influence. The new world leaders became the previously isolationist United States and its new rival the backward, severely beaten but victorious Soviet Union. The pre World War II powers were now relegated to a second tier of international influence. The *Enola Gay* also symbolizes the beginning of the atomic age, characterized by the cold war arms race, international espionage, and the negative impact they have on our collective consciousness.

The *Enola Gay* and its mission are more than a relic or a historic milestone, especially to many in the peace community. As mathematician Dr. David Isles eloquently remarked to another

scientist who views the US nuclear program from a "normal problem solving" science format:

atomic scientists have committed the greatest miscarriage of justice and crime of the 20th century. Physics was prostituted in the political drive for mass produced war. What one man can now do is push one button from afar and kill several million people. There is no comparison to any form of conventional death to atomic killing.

Many recognize this and see that ground zero has come home to our back yards. Patriots now build bomb shelters and school children practice air raid drills. No other international icon or event in history has arguably ever had so great an impact on world politics and political psychology than the *Enola Gay*. The linkage of many diverse and often seemingly unrelated post war events can be traced back to the flight of the *Enola Gay*. This linkage is a source of conflict which has confounded and confused the overall meaning of what the *Enola Gay* represents. It therefore should come as no surprise that the conflict that erupted over the depiction of the *Enola Gay* and the atomic bombing of Japan was so controversial.

The Normal Process of Constructing and Exhibit

The process by which the National Air and Space Museum (NASM) constructs an exhibit follows a protocol that has been in effect since at least the mid-1970's. Typically, the idea for a museum exhibit evolves from an informal process wherein someone in the museum develops an idea for an exhibit and passes it by their manager and then the department chairman. The idea will then be roughly thought out in a three page memo. From there the chair of the department talks to the Deputy Director, the curators and maybe the chief of design for ideas. An exhibit can take typically about two years to go from the idea stage to the opening day of the exhibit.

A number of scheduled milestones are set, scripts are developed, and all artifacts and photographs are gathered. The exhibit script is the major structural component of the exhibit because it sets out the sequence of steps that lead up to the major focal event of the exhibit and then trails off to allow one to focus attention on the event and perhaps, though rarely, allows the visitor to contemplate the meaning in regards to the future. The artifacts are secondary to the script and are props that help convey the script story. The refining of the script may typically require three draft rounds until NASM personnel think they have it in its best form. The designer then works with the curator and an advanced script so they can figure out how to lay out the displays. The script is also circulated inside and outside the museum and to an Advisory Review Group made up of appointed citizens and some federal officials. Input from the advisory group, as well as public response, was also considered in the refining of the script.

For the most part, the major characteristic of an exhibit's development is that it is usually closed to the general public's direct and sustained input except on "field trip" outings when Smithsonian personnel deliberately measure public awareness of the proposed exhibits themes. In this case, a non scientific survey was conducted at the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial on the topic of the

atomic bomb. The results tended to suggest that older Americans are well informed about the atomic bomb while people in their twenties and younger, in the majority of cases, could not identify where the bomb was dropped. Popular answers included: Tokyo, Pearl Harbor, and Korea.

In the *Enola Gay* situation, a number of unusual alterations in the normal exhibit development process were committed either by the omission of certain steps or by rearrangement of steps so that events would, by default, unfold in a predetermined way. Even *the Washington Post*, which tends to have a liberal perspective, came to the conclusion that Smithsonian officials were not dealing honestly and openly with the public. In essence, this was not just a military or veteran criticism of the museum. Groups with many political perspectives became critical of NASM's handling of the exhibit's development. The major complaints made by most stakeholders were: 1) the normal process of exhibit development was not followed in a logical and normal order, 2) the exhibit script was biased and 3) public input was stymied.

The unprecedented characteristic of the *Enola Gay* script was that it was written *after* the artifacts were collected. Curators made special trips to Japan to secure particular artifacts of the bombing and concluded special agreements on how they would be displayed before a script was even developed. This not only completely reversed the long standing development process, but left NASM open to criticism of deliberate manipulation. In science and historical research, when a researcher collects only confirming data or evidence to support a point of view and ignores disconfirming data the resulting product becomes nothing more than propaganda. The script was to be constructed around artifacts that came from the Hiroshima bombing which could easily provide a decidedly pro-Japanese interpretation on them. The Japanese also had unprecedented access to the script and were directly encouraged to provide feedback while various American groups had to demand that their input be heard. The Advisory Review Group, which was considered highly suspect by some participants who were intimately familiar with the process, met only once. Nor did they produce the customary majority or minority papers as is a requirement of the process. A military stakeholder called the Advisory Review Group meeting "A front in essence to demonstrate that the Smithsonian has gathered and heard from a diverse set of people." One Congressional aide asserted that the Smithsonian curators "practice a perverted form of historical amnesia." Much to the chagrin of many stakeholders, NASM even went as far as to copyright the draft exhibit scripts to further reduce public access.

Historical Cleansing and Political Correctness--Constructing the Exhibit's Time Line

"Crossroads," the original script, begins a few months before the dropping of the bomb. This starting point angered military personnel and veterans because of its blatant disregard for the facts that led up to the need for the *Enola Gay* and the atomic bomb in the first place. Military groups demanded that the exhibit properly start in 1937 when Japan was in the midst of destroying Asia in its imperial military "Co-Prosperity Sphere" campaign. According to military stakeholders, other events that needed inclusion or elaboration were: the Manchurian Massacre,

the Tonkin death march, Korean slavery, and Pearl Harbor. A veteran stakeholder summarized these events as those that "forced people to unwillingly fight and die because of Japan's expansionism." This problem is best summed up in a letter to Dr. Harwit from Mr. Monroe Hatch of the Air Force Association, dated September 12, 1993, in which he clearly spelled out his dissatisfaction with the "Crossroads" script.

The concept paper treats Japan and the United States in the war as if their participation in the war were morally equivalent. If anything, incredibly, it gives the benefit of opinion to Japan, which was the aggressor. The revised concept paper plans for flashback segments, including a major one on the firebombing of Japan--emphasizing the casualties--but there is little mention of Pearl Harbor, except to characterize the American response as 'vengeance.' Japanese aggression and atrocities seem to have no significant place in this account.

Generally speaking, peace groups and numerous academics were happier with the "Crossroads" version. It focused on the atomic bomb, nuclear destruction and the ensuing arms race.

In an April 16, 1994 memo. Dr. Harwit wrote a response to the Armed Forces Association and other military groups criticism of the script that "A second reading shows that we do have a lack of balance and that much of the criticism that has been levied against us is understandable." In abbreviated form he focused on:

- Talk of Hitler's vow not to bomb civilians yet have the exhibit focus on Dresden, without showing similar detail of Hitler and Japan's bombings and atrocities in Nanking, Warsaw, Antwerp, Nottingham. Also, we "talk of the heavy bombing of Tokyo [and] show great empathy for Japanese mothers, but are strangely quiet about similar losses to Americans and among our own allies in Europe and Asia."
- "We show terrible pictures of human suffering in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in section 400, without earlier, in section 100, showing pictures of the suffering the Japanese had inflicted in China..... Nor do we show picture of Japanese racism against Americans."
- "We show virtually no pictures of Allied dead or wounded in either sections 100 or 300. Section 300 is almost clinically military in its tone, when contrasted to section 400 which speaks about the action on the ground entirely in human terms."
- "The alternatives to the atomic bomb are stated more as 'probabilities' than as 'speculations' and are dwelled on more than they should be."

- "Section 400 has too many explicit and horrible pictures."

From the same memo Dr. Harwit conceded that "if we make these changes, I think we will have a better exhibition." In conjunction with other military criticisms the exhibit script was rewritten. The final script, the "Last Act," substantially altered the "Crossroads" script by putting the *Enola Gay*, as the Historian for the Air Force states, in its "proper historical context." In this scenario, the *Enola Gay* represents the end of the Pacific war by delivering the last definitive combat blow. Smithsonian writers were then forced by political pressure to re-write the script under the supervision of a group assembled under the authority of Dr. Harwit called the "Tiger Team" that included veterans. Understandably, peace groups were dismayed with this and went to great lengths to document the deletions. The accuracy of the deletions were incomplete due to the fact that the comparison focused on editing between drafts one and three and not the final version. Even so, a partial list compiled included these important points of deletion:

- Any mention of a scholarly debate or public controversy concerning the bombing of Hiroshima
- All quotes by government officials or military leaders who opposed or criticized the decision to use the bomb
- Alternative explanations for using the bomb including "sending a signal to the Soviets"
- All references to Japan being near total collapse prior to the bombing
- Recognition that the Japanese surrender was not "unconditional"
- A suggestion that the \$2 billion price tag for the bomb was a reason enough
- All references to the bomb being used "without warning"
- All photos of dead Japanese victims of the bomb (leaving one)
- Most of the photos of injured survivors (leaving six).
- Quotes by survivors of the bombings
- Recognition of US racism against the Japanese.
- All references to the Japanese-American internment camps (Military questioned its relevancy and had this struck)
- Truman's quote upon hearing about the use of the bomb: "This is the greatest thing in history."
- A reference to Truman's second thoughts after using the bomb
- A reference to the bombing of Tokyo as being the most destructive ever
- A quote by Marshall calling for air attacks on civilians
- US complicity in some of the fire bombings of Europe
- A statistic that bomb survivors had five times the chance of getting leukemia than others
- Numerous artifacts related to children who died in the bombing
- A reference to some people questioning the use of the bomb against Nagasaki

- The entire "legacy" section on the arms race, nuclear testing, radiation experiments, anti-nuclear activities, etc.(Mitchell, 1992).

These deletions partially focused on US government and military officials second guessing the use of the bomb, alternative reasons for using the bomb and artifacts and dialogue that focused on the people of Hiroshima. These were precisely the areas that military stakeholders vehemently demanded be eliminated because they deemed them to be irrelevant to the story or entirely too biased against actual events. One military stakeholder put it this way, "It was what Truman was struggling with in his head at the time of Hiroshima that is important, not what people are seeing in hindsight."

In this scenario, stakeholders took part in a game of creating a sense of credibility and legitimacy for themselves by partially describing others as being unreasonable and unjustified in their complaining. Both military and peace groups did this by appealing to ones sense of fairness, compassion, logic and historical accuracy as well as by use of labels. Interestingly enough, stakeholders used similar labels to stigmatize the other. In interviews military and veteran groups labeled peace groups and academic stakeholders as "politically correct revisionists" "historical cleansers" "anti-American" "narrow minded" and as one veteran angrily stated,

They can't wait for me to die with the truth because I was there while they weren't. As soon as I am dead they will brainwash our grand children and send me and my buddies to hell. These people are incredible and don't give a damn about freedom and democracy. My friends died so they could run their damn mouths.

On the other hand, peace groups and academics were no more polite by labeling military personnel and especially veterans as "mindless" "incapable of thoughtful reflection" "jingoists on parade" "glorifiers of war and death" and as one peace activist says, "The military is at it again. Forcing a public institution to its knees so that its image, its impact and its depiction of events are not questioned by any free thinkers or by those who dare to stand up against their oppression." To be completely fair, many stakeholders did not have as harsh criticisms of others although there was a tendency by most to use labels that depicted others as being unreasonable or unwilling to compromise. It should be clear that whichever group eventually won the debate on when the time line for the exhibit would begin would, by default, eventually control its the overall focus and message. The irony, as will be discussed later, is that the time line could have been expanded rather than fought over and the exhibit could have met all stakeholders concerns.

The time line debate could have been resolved by recognizing that the zones of agreement were large and that what one group thought appropriate does not automatically exclude one time period at the expense of another. Understanding the motivation behind the *Enola Gay* mission makes it important to start the exhibit in 1937. By the same measure, the *Enola Gay* also set in motion profoundly important events even if it is only a symbol of what transpired after its historic flight. An extension of the time line to include both pre and post war influence was perhaps necessary for a greater understanding of its importance to world history. An either or mentality--which most stakeholders held-- was not only poor strategic thinking it was arrogant--

one perspective was no more important than others. The time line is a manifestation of the attempts to control decision making rather than to collaborate on the scope of the proposed exhibit. If viewed in this way, it is easier to see the attempts to exclude one group's perspective in favor of another. The time line aspect of the conflict is a classic "distributional" strategy while the ability to focus on commonly agreed facts should be seen as the "integrative" approach. The latter was not attempted and as the next section demonstrates, presents a number of problems.

Common Ground Based on Facts Still Produce Competing Interpretations and Meaning

This highly political conflict was once naively thought to be managed by apparently indisputable and unquestionable objective facts that somehow became transformed into a state where suddenly there were nothing more than opinions, feelings, subjective ideas and filters through which to abstractly evaluate reality. Facts are no longer tangible or real, they are constructed in the mind and only have meaning in the world of thoughts and ideas. In such settings, there now becomes an acceptable practice of finding truth in propaganda. People unabashedly point to data that confirms their views and just as easily discard, discount or de-legitimize the disconfirming data that would force them off their political positions. The analysis of the interview data demonstrates that there is a great deal of overlap on what people agree on "factually" (i.e. an event that has occurred and can not be denied) even though there are many interpretations of what the event should mean politically. There are many veins or patterns running through the data that demonstrate this finding. One of these, that focuses on the bombs development, not only suffices to make this pattern clear but is perhaps the most graphic example of this interpretation battle. The following five events surrounding the bombs development and use sum up the dynamics of this phenomenon where facts are depicted, interpreted and given meaning.

The first undisputed fact that has plenty of conflicting meanings comes on August 2, 1939 when Nobel Prize physicist Albert Einstein sent a letter to President Roosevelt which warned

that the element uranium may be turned into a new and important source of energy... [and]... that it may become possible to set up a nuclear chain reaction in a large mass of uranium, by which vast amounts of power and large quantities of new radium-like elements would be generated. Now it appears almost certain that this could be achieved in the immediate future. This new phenomenon would also lead to the construction of bombs and it is conceivable-- though much less certain--that extremely powerful bombs of a new type may thus be constructed.

Einstein's letter also mentioned that the Germans had access to the best uranium ore supplies in the world and hinted that they therefore had the capability of developing such a bomb. His major

point was to alert the President that "quick action on the part of the Administration" may be necessary.

Depending on which stakeholder was being interviewed, this incident either provided a rationale for the bomb building project or conversely, as David Isles said, the beginning of the "greatest miscarriage of justice and crime of the 20th century." Symbolically, for some peace activists this event had little meaning to the overall theme of the exhibit while for some veterans it was seen as not only historically accurate but in need of more examination and elaboration. It was either irrelevant because it does not focus on the major theme of nuclear war, or it was absolutely necessary because it is the catalyst that begins the process that ends the war.

A second unchallenged fact that most stakeholders agreed to was that Japan attacked the United States of America on December 7, 1941 in an air raid on the US Navy's Pacific Fleet stationed at Pearl Harbor Hawaii. The United States entered the war shortly thereafter and joined forces against Imperial Japan in a 44 month vicious island hopping campaign that eventually took the lives of 102,167 U.S. Army, Navy, Air Corps and Marines and left another 176,609 wounded (Source: Army Center for Military History, Navy/Marine Historical Center). Japanese casualties were much higher for a variety of reasons. In addition, the number of dead and wounded military personnel and civilians due to Japan's military aggression under its so called "Co-Prosperity Sphere" can never be accurately assessed but it surely is many more times that of Japanese and American casualties combined.

Military and veteran groups stated that this information was "absolutely essential" for an understanding of the need to develop the *Enola Gay* and the bomb. Others saw it as secondary or of little value to the meaning of the exhibit. It detracted from the *Enola Gay* as a catalyst of the nuclear age and actually "interfered" with ones understanding by giving people the "feeling" that the bombing was necessary; a fact that all agreed existed but one that had divergent value and meaning.

For the third fact, we also know that on December 2, 1942 at 3:42 P.M., Enrico Fermi and his team of scientists accomplished what many considered impossible only a decade earlier--the world's first sustained nuclear chain reaction (Cooper, 1995). This is an indisputable fact. Fermi's team created a self sustaining nuclear chain reaction in the basement of a gymnasium at the University of Chicago. From that date until the end of the war the United States knew, at least in theory, that they had the knowledge and potential capability of creating a nuclear weapon. U.S. intelligence also knew other countries including Japan, Germany and the Soviet Union either contemplated or initiated their own bomb building programs. At the end of the war, it was learned that these competing programs were either abandoned or in such infantile stages of development that they posed no threat to the Allied countries. Details of the Manhattan Project, especially focusing on the scientific and technical hurdles faced in developing the bomb, have been documented in great detail. (For instance see, Allen, 1995; Alperovitz, 1994; Bernstein, 1976; Bundy, 1990; Christian, 1995; Dower, 1986; Feis, 1966; Heppenheimer, 1995; Hershberg, 1993; Holloway, 1994; Jones, 1985; Messer, 1982; Rhodes, 1986; Sherwin, 1977; Spector, 1985.)

Depending on which stakeholder was interviewed, the details of the bomb building program was "vital" or "nonsense." What stakeholders thought about this fact was where conflict continued to arise. The interesting pattern in this analysis is that people's responses to such event are predictable. The "explanatory" variable is political orientation on the peace and war continuum. Two peace activists saw this as a dark moment in human history and one that forever changed the balance between what we know to be morally correct and what we know to be prima facie morally unjustified. On the other hand, two military officials saw this as a crowning moment for science as well as the war effort. They saw it as perhaps the way to get out of the war with a fanatical enemy bent on either our or everyone's destruction.

Perhaps one of the more emotionally laden events for stakeholders was the fourth fact that most accurately depicts this phenomenon of ideological infiltration and historical amnesia. This time it occurred at 5:29 AM on July 16, 1945, at the Trinity test site in the New Mexico desert. At that moment, the world experienced the first nuclear explosion and was ushered into the nuclear weapons age with the successful detonation of a nuclear plutonium implosion bomb. The overwhelming force of the detonation was recalled in vivid detail by many of those present during the event.

What is of interest about these recollections of the explosion is how various stakeholders chose to cite specific eyewitness' recollections. It appears that most peoples' recall coincidentally happened to support their political views on nuclear weapons. For instance, one peace activist focused on J. Robert Oppenheimer's thoughts to himself the moment the bomb detonated--reciting to himself the chilling line from the Hindu Text the *Bhavada Gita* "I am become death destroyer of worlds." This recollection of Oppenheimer's experience presents the event through a moral lens which is arguably an important component and one that many in the peace community have taken as a major framework for issuing warrants or condemnations of nuclear war. The point of this recollection for the peace activist was the realization and major focus on the immorality of nuclear weapons. The issue of morality was high among all stakeholders yet, on the other hand, two representatives from the military focused on Oppenheimer's calculations of the bomb just after detonation. Oppenheimer was said to have dropped a few shreds of paper once the first shock wave hit their position miles away from ground zero. From his observation of the distance the shreds traveled, he scratched out a few calculations and determined that the force of the bomb was equivalent to 20,000 tons of TNT. Sophisticated calculations using machines confirmed his estimate a few weeks later. The same event can be looked upon with two completely different foci and subsequent meanings.

The last fact in this chain of events occurred when the *Enola Gay* dropped the first atomic bomb. Of all five events and facts, this was the only one that both falls into the time line zone of agreement and one that everyone agreed occurred. The preceding four events were not considered by many peace groups as relevant to an understanding of the atomic *bombing*. For other groups, it was crucial to an understanding of the atomic bomb *project*. Even so, these facts constitute a small cross section of the many conflicting ideas for the focus of the exhibit. There are some zones of agreement but almost everything else relating to the *Enola Gay* exhibit, that which it exemplifies and signifies, what we interpret as significant or disregard as trivial, honor or abhor, cherish or deny, constitutes "conflict cleavages" in the thoughts and feelings of the stakeholders concerning the meaning of the exhibit. So even where there was common

agreement in fact, there was little significance and ultimate meaning.

Symbolic Conflict Cleavages That Brought About the Exhibit's Down Sizing

If you can not win a conflict using facts, then the next step is to take the conflict into the zone of abstract symbolism, make it ideological and support your argument in one's beliefs, values and needs. Conflict cleavages, or those areas where there appears to be no common ground, often occur in value laden debates. There is an affective component to such debates that firmly entrenches parties. As the former NASM Director Robert McCormick Adams states quite accurately "the significance of most human artifacts found in museums lies safely in the past... However, certain objects erase the possibility of detachment. Icons of the atomic age are one of these." (Bello, 1993: 123). I suppose that the more value laden a conflict becomes the more conflict cleavages accompany it into reasoned public debate. Subsequently, debate takes on the form of a struggle over symbolic meaning rather than on the establishment of fact.

Statements by the *Enola Gay* exhibit stakeholders depicted conflict cleavages focusing on at least four symbolic struggles: whether the bombings were (ir)rational, (un)justified, (il)legitimate, and (im)moral. Careful analysis of each conflict cleavage shows that disagreement was inevitable. However, disagreement over values and beliefs does not always mean that the outcome of this conflict should have been a no-win situation for everyone. There are ways to create partial agreements, or at least increase understanding, and bring a sense of humanity to such conflicts that is largely ignored by the conflict intervention and practitioner literature.

Dropping the Bomb was (Ir)rational

Was dropping an atomic bomb a rational act? Did it do what it was intended in the larger scheme of the progress of the war? The (ir)rationality component regarding the reasons to drop the bomb is couched in stakeholder's psychological disposition, sense of logic, interpretation of data and most importantly, what might be called selective attention.

Peace activists primarily focused on America's intent to *prolong* the war as well as Japan's ability to continue its military engagement. Coupling the Japanese strength and determination with the Allies fire bombing campaign to "soften" the battle terrain before the major amphibious landings code named "Operation Downfall" provided enough information for two peace activist stakeholders to declare that atomic weapons were useless and irrational because the Japanese were already defeated. In hindsight alone, did military planners realize that it was mostly a matter of time before the military government might sue for peace? From the Fellowship of Reconciliation comes the following quote:

Many Americans believe that the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki prevented a bloody invasion of Japan that could have resulted in up to a million US casualties, a figure 5 times higher for the Japanese. However, there were many indications that Japan was already close to surrender at the time of the bombing. A 1946 Strategic Bombing Survey conducted by the US military concluded that Japan would have surrendered by the end of 1945, even without the use of the atomic bomb, or a US invasion. Scholars who have studied military planning documents are also unable to find any worst-case scenario citing more than 46,000 US deaths, even if an invasion had occurred (Becker, 1995).

From the "Last Act" Script comes the following quote,

Based on available information after the war, the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey concluded in 1946 that 'Certainly prior to the 31 December 1945, and in all probability prior to 1 November 1945, Japan would have surrendered even if the atomic bombs had not been dropped, even if Russia had not entered the war, and even if no invasion had been planned or contemplated.'

Peace groups made two points about the irrationality of the bomb. First, there was evidence that the Japanese were quietly investigating peace talks. From the "Last Act" script we read,

In 1940 American intelligence experts cracked the Japanese diplomatic code. This operation, code named 'Magic,' allowed the deciphering of messages between Tokyo and the Japanese Embassy in Moscow and gave the United States knowledge of the Japanese peace initiative in the spring of 1945. The intercepted messages showed that Japan was seeking Russian mediation to end the war, but also showed that it rejected 'unconditional surrender' and hoped for significant allied concessions. These ranged from the preservation of the Emperor to the retention of captured territories.

Second the Japanese were interested in clarifying and negotiating the meaning of "unconditional surrender." Some peace groups mistakenly claimed that this was not omitted from the script. As evidence see the following quotes from the fifth script the "Last Act."

Unconditional surrender was also a popular policy in America, because of the fear that anything less than total victory would fail to root out the causes of fascism and militarism in Germany, Italy and Japan--just as the Versailles Treaty after World War I had failed to prevent the resurgence of German power.

A key obstacle to any Japanese surrender was the Emperor's position. To the Japanese warlords, the Allied demand for unconditional surrender meant the total destruction of their political system, including a 'divine' monarchy that had survived for more than a thousand years.

On April 15, one week before Roosevelt's death, Japanese Prime Minister Kuniaki Koiso and his cabinet resigned because of the increasingly disastrous course of the war--the second such resignation in less than a year. A peace faction in the military-dominated Japanese government

had begun to realize that a way had to be found to negotiate an end to the war. The allied demand for "unconditional surrender" was however, regarded as intolerable.

On the other side of this (ir)rationality dichotomy, military stakeholders emphasized Japanese military atrocities in Asia, the brutality inflicted on POWs and foreign civilians, 667,000 Korean and 38,000 Chinese who became slave laborers or "comfort girls," and the almost fanatical devotion to the Emperor which is clearly manifest in Kamikaze pilots who, according to military stakeholders claims, were glorified by Smithsonian script writers and set designers. There was also the issue of the collective conscious of the Japanese military and civilian leadership in regards to Togo's emphasis on the Samurai code of death before dishonor. This was clearly depicted in the original "Crossroads" exhibit script that showed, in glorified fashion, unusual self-sacrifices such as human driven missiles and torpedoes. Military stakeholders also placed an emphasis on a Japanese civilian population trained in combat procedures and who were ready to die fighting or to commit suicide. From the fifth script entitled the "Last Act"

The battle for Saipan marked the first time Americans invaded an island inhabited by Japanese civilians. During the bitter fighting, the refusal of enemy troops to surrender and mass suicides of civilians resulted in over 60,000 Japanese deaths. The reasons for such behavior could be traced to the Japanese belief in the ideals of Bushido, an ancient code that Prime Minister Hideki Tojo had incorporated into the Japanese military code of 1941. The new code stated that Japanese should resist being taken prisoner and should kill themselves if captured. As the tide of the war turned against Japan, Tojo commanded Japanese troops to 'die but never surrender,' and to accept 'death before dishonor.'

These points of view and the segments from the script point out two things. First, many of the claims made by peace groups as to omissions were later reinstated. Second, no matter how well one argues, there will always be a reason to have dropped or not dropped the bomb. History, in regards to fact and events, tends to favor the interpretation for those who dropped the bomb and the reasons they give for it.

Dropping the Bomb Was (Un)justified

Was the bomb warranted? Does the US have to provide evidence to prove that it needed to develop and use the bomb? Did it serve a useful purpose? After the bomb was dropped could the US government defend its actions? These questions get to the notion of justification for the use of the bomb.

Both supporters and opponents of the atomic bombings made references to the "just war tradition" in defense of their positions. While there is no single set of criteria recognized as definitive of the tradition, there is general agreement that the various criteria can be divided into two categories. The first is "jus ad bellum" or the reasons or conditions for resorting to war. The second is "jus in bello" or the conduct--strategy, tactics and individual actions--taken in war.

Supporters of the bombing, knowingly or not, were likely to express agreement with "jus ad bellum" criteria such as the war was "just" in light of the situation leading to this event. Competent and legitimate authority made the decision to develop and use the bomb. The

intention for its development and use was "right" i.e. to end the war and save countless lives. And finally the intended result of the bombings was based on a high probability of success, namely, compelling the Japanese to surrender. However, few took the position that this was the last resort and therefore leaves open the notion that other alternatives such as Oppenheimer's demonstration of the bomb over Tokyo Bay open for consideration.

Opponents of the bombings, knowingly or not, were likely to make reference to the "jus in bello" criteria to justify their position. The atomic bombings violated the criteria of proportionality i.e. regarding the disproportionate damage done at the moment of the bombing and its aftermath on direct victims and their descendants and also the impact on the world. The effects were completely disproportionate to the events that led up to its use. Opponents were also likely to cite the violation of the criteria of discrimination in that noncombatants, namely civilians, must not be intentionally targeted for destruction even though the "militarization" of Hiroshima does not qualify civilians as combatants.

The means for measuring any justification for dropping the bomb appears to be dependent on two factors. The first relates to the number of casualties from battles being fought and for the battles being planned. This relates to the "jus ad bellum" criteria. As the fifth version "Last Act" script noted, "Truman saw the bomb as a way to end the war and save lives by avoiding a costly invasion of Japan. He wanted, he said, to prevent casualties on the scale of 'an Okinawa from one end of Japan to the other.'"

From a strategic military perspective, a weapon such as the atomic bomb not only served to bring the war to a quicker end, it decisively produced a clear victor. However, there are other potential motives brought forth by peace groups for dropping the bomb that force an examination of the violation of "jus in bello" criteria of proportionality and discrimination because of other motives than combat exchange. Some quotes from the fifth version "Last Act" script hint at some of them. A partial list of motives includes:

- *The overwhelming cost of the program:* "The few decision-makers who knew about the Manhattan Project always assumed that the atomic bomb would be used against either Germany or Japan. Some, like Major General Groves, thought that it could be decisive in ending the war. That alone could justify the United States' huge investment in the bomb - - \$2 billion, or roughly \$20 billion in 1990s dollars -- but the project's great expense also motivated him to have it ready as soon as possible."
- *The expectation that the bomb would be used:* "At no time, from 1941 to 1945 did I ever hear it suggested by the President, or any other responsible member of the government, that atomic energy should not be used in the war." -- Henry Stimson, Secretary of War
- *Consequences of not using the bomb:* "If this weapon fizzles, each of you can look forward to a lifetime of testifying before congressional investigating committees." -- Major General Groves to his staff, December 24, 1944.

- *Other actors involved:* "The atomic bomb was ultimately used against Japan, but it was built as a response to a German threat. In late 1938, German scientists discovered how to split ("fission") the uranium atom, releasing nuclear energy. When physicists in the United States learned of this discovery, many feared that Hitler might acquire a frightening new weapon; an atomic bomb. Refugees from the Nazis, most notably the Hungarian physicist Leo Szilard and Eugene Wigner, feared this possibility so much that they began to search for a way to warn Western governments."
- *Knowledge of a German program:* "In June 1942, soon after the American decision to proceed with the atomic bomb, the German authorities (unaware of that decision) judged that the huge investment required to produce a bomb was too large for their war economy to support. They also expected to win the war before such an effort would bear fruit. The United States and Britain were unaware of Germany's decision and continued to assume that the Nazis would acquire the atomic bomb, possibly before the allies did."
- *Knowledge of a Japanese program:* "Dr. Yosio Nishina led one of the Japanese projects to investigate the possibility of an atomic bomb. He did not get beyond the small scale laboratory experiments before his laboratory was destroyed by an American air raid on Tokyo in April 1945."
- *Knowledge of a Soviet program:* "Joseph Stalin's Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was a factor in American calculations regarding the new weapon and the Japanese. The alliance of the United States, the British Commonwealth, and the Soviet Union, which was forged only after Germany attacked Russia in 1941, was one of convenience. Suspicion between West and East remained high, despite positive feelings evoked by their common struggle against the Nazis."
- *Fear of Soviet Intrusion:* "While U.S. military leaders argued that Soviet entry into the Pacific war must precede the U.S. invasion of Japan, some of Truman's civilian advisors began to question its desirability."
- *Fear of a Soviet Atomic Bomb:* "Stalin authorized a Soviet atomic bomb project in 1942, but did not give it its highest priority until after the United States' atomic bombings of Japanese cities in August 1945."
- *Fear of a Spread of Communism:* "Key Advisors to President Truman also began to worry about the spread of communism in post-war Asia. Indeed, Stalin was interested in joining the Pacific war so that he could bring China and Korea into the Soviet sphere and share in the occupation of Japan."
- *Sending a Message to Stalin:* "As tensions grew in spring of 1945 over the Soviet domination of Poland and other European countries, Secretary of War Stimson hoped that American possession of the atomic bomb might help the Soviets 'play ball' in Europe and elsewhere."

For many of the reasons outlined above, peace activist stakeholders condemned the government's justification and motive for the use of the bomb. However, there was an interesting debate within, at least a non-conformist fringe of the peace community, that disagreed. Mitsou Okamoto, professor and peace scholar from Hiroshima Shudo University, proclaimed in a talk co-presented with myself that the first bombing of Hiroshima was justified given the context in which the parties found themselves. However, he continued his comments by saying the second bombing of Nagasaki was unjustified for the exact same reasons. I believe the reasons for this seemingly disjointed thinking may make some sense. Professor Okamoto posited that the impact of the bomb had been felt not just in Hiroshima but also by the government and military leaders who were the real target and so the "jus ad bellum" criteria appear to have been met. Waiting to let this sink in would have made the impact even more meaningful. However, the strategy adopted by the US military was to present one bombing after another, as long as supplies lasted, as a means to further pressure the government and this violates the "jus in bello" criteria.

In essence, stakeholders decided to support the various justifications that upheld their chosen strategy to end the war and thus in determining the issue of using the bomb. For one group, the war was already essentially over so it is unwarranted (unjustifiable) and without reason (irrational) and therefore wrong. For another, the war would have continued until the Japanese submitted to unconditional surrender, therefore it was not only rational but fully justifiable. With the means-ends debate raging on the proximity and timing of the bombing as well as a land invasion, it was hard to determine if there can be any zone of potential agreement among the stakeholders.

Dropping the Bomb Was (Im)moral

Was dropping an atomic bomb a breach of some code of military conduct? Does war allow nations to suspend the rules of engagement? Does the bomb even fit into the rules of engagement or is it in the same category as neurological and chemical weapons? Of all the symbols the *Enola Gay* represents, the one that had practically no zone of agreement was the issue of morality. For equally understandable reasons, various stakeholders claimed that their stance was morally justified and therefore allowed them to lay claim to a superior argument and negotiating position. Yet, no matter how concrete people make their moral arguments out to be, they also appear to be somewhat malleable in terms of the context of battle and war. What we would usually consider immoral somehow becomes acceptable or common place during times of war. Moralizing on the part of peace activists was, for some military stakeholders, nothing more than a smoke screen for anti-military political sentiments. Moralizing on the part of the government or military was given as much credibility by peace activists. In only a few instances during interviews did stakeholders attempt to view the idea of morality from a multitude of perspectives and when they did, it was typically an unusual discussion in that most of them felt that they had to come down on one side or the other.

Morality was discussed by the stakeholders in two ways. The first was, surprisingly, that most people interviewed focused on the sheer destructive power of nuclear weapons and the ability of such a weapon to produce staggering and nearly unimaginable numbers of casualties. The second

focused on the reasons for using the bomb whereby the major issue being manipulated by stakeholders is the creation of images of the Japanese either victim or offender. This attempt to label the Japanese as anything other than "the enemy" substantially indicated the way morality was being applied to the situation. Most veteran stakeholders saw the Japanese military government as the aggressors and vehemently argued that any other depiction of them was morally incorrect, historically inaccurate and "bold face lying." Peace activist stakeholders tended to focus on the human dimension of dropping the bomb on civilian targets. There was plenty of debate between stakeholders over the status of Hiroshima as a civilian or militarized city.

Within the morality debate, it was interesting to see how stakeholders talked about the bomb and death. One stakeholder, a Marine who fought on Okinawa, went to great lengths to compare the bomb to conventional weapons in an effort to show its unbelievable power. His approach was different than most others in that he sought out examples of the way the bomb kills. He made one comparison of an event that he thought was the most devastating he had heard of before the atomic bomb. On the evening of March 9-10, 1945 a group of 334 B-29's bombers, each loaded with 2,000 tons of incendiary bombs, dropped their cargo on the city of Tokyo. Using a cross section bombing technique and spacing bomb bay delivery at 50 feet per bomb and then calculating it so that each incendiary bomb would break apart into clusters a few hundred feet from the ground produced horrendous results. The military estimated that there was one fire for every 30,000 square feet. In a city made mostly of wood and paper, the end result was described by the US Strategic Bombing Survey as a "conflagration" (Rhodes, 1986). More than 100,000 men women and children died while over 41,000 were seriously injured, and 1,000,000 became homeless (Rhodes, 1986). Now compare this to Hiroshima. With one plane, one bomb and less than ten men the city of Hiroshima lost 80,000 people almost instantly. Structures made of steel were bent like reeds in the wind and almost every structure within a one mile radius of ground zero was reduced to rubble. The ensuing firestorms destroyed even more of the city. Tens of thousands would wait days, months or years to succumb to their wounds, sicknesses and diseases that the bomb produced. His remarks are perhaps the only ones that did not take a position. Most peace activists stakeholders had the general tendency to morally abhor all types of weapons and all forms of killing. However, even they too had a special category of disdain for nuclear weapons. Military and veteran stakeholders tended to discuss the atomic bomb in almost sterile ways, touching on the technology, science and the ultimate power of such as weapon. For them, morality was not discussed in terms of ability to kill.

The second way morality was debated was over the labeling and description of the Japanese. In the original "Crossroads" script there was what NASM Director Dr. Harwit called "a lack of balance" in that the descriptions of the Japanese were humanized and almost glorified. One line that even many peace groups considered ill advised or biased and as veterans say is particularly offensive went, "For most Americans this war 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."

The ensuing response by veterans groups, military organizations, members of Congress and private citizens was swift and completely one sided. After much wrangling and the subsequent rewriting of the script, this sentence was substituted in the fifth script "Last Act" with another

more generally acceptable perspective: "Japanese expansionism was marked by naked aggression and extreme brutality. The slaughter of 200,000 to 300,000 Chinese in Nanking in December 1937 shocked the world. The Pearl Harbor attack plunged the United States into a just war against Japanese aggression in the Pacific."

The depiction of the Japanese as people was what peace activists wanted to convey. This was not the point being made by veterans. They were reminding us that it was the Japanese who started a war that American military personnel were forced to contend with and finish. Morally, Japan had "clay feet" and they should've been prepared to suffer the consequences of their actions. In other words, some stakeholders asserted that Japan was responsible for the whole affair starting--not at Pearl Harbor, but in Nanking. Peace groups, on the other hand, focused on the consequences of dropping the bomb--the human agony, suffering and death that such a weapon brings. They then asked whether such a weapon is necessary. The answer for them was no.

The time line debate discussed earlier also played an important role regarding the morality of the bombing. By extending the time line back to the mid 1930's, the exhibit documented the atrocities of the Japanese Imperial war effort in Asia and thus provided historical accounts of the crimes committed by them. This created an exhibit that was harshly critical of the Japanese. Once the person got to the bombing section, the impact may have been lessened because people have this image of the Japanese as aggressive, mean spirited, dominating terrorists of Asia. If the time line was from 1945 to the present, this image of the Japanese would have been almost completely absent. When one got to the point in the exhibit of the bombing, the impact the museum visitor might have felt was surely going to provide a different impression. Regardless of the time lines influence on how we label the Japanese the facts remain that the *Enola Gay* did drop an atomic bomb that initially killed 80,000 people.

Dropping the Bomb was (Il)legitimate: It Did (Not) Save Lives

Who has the authority to use nuclear weapons? Should the use of the bomb been demonstrated as the Chicago scientists who developed it requested? Dr. Martin Harwit, Director of the NASM, negotiated with military representatives from the American Legion on the number of battle casualties that may have occurred in the event that the Allies invaded the home islands of Japan. They settled upon 250,000 as a reasonable number even though military representatives thought it was on the low side and peace groups thought it was entirely too high. How any of them could know is still not clear. What is clear, and what has been largely ignored, is seen in a comment made by Herman Wolk: "The point is that Truman made the decision based primarily on estimated American invasion casualties. He wanted to prevent, in his own words, 'an Okinawa from one end of Japan to the other'" (1994) If the script's focus was kept on what President Truman said and thought during this time period, as well as sheer number of purple hearts the military requested for the main island invasions that never came, (later used in Korea, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf War) we get a glimpse into what these people must have been thinking and feeling. In other words, the President and the US military leadership were expecting to have as many casualties in the main island invasion of Japan as we have had in every subsequent conflict or war since. This preparation was one indirect indication of what they were thinking.

Nonetheless, the arbitrary number that was agreed upon made the point that at least some Allied lives were saved because the atomic bombing brought a quicker end to the war.

However, after negotiations with the military, Dr. Harwit flew to California to consult with Dr. Barton Bernstein of Stanford University who is perhaps the most knowledgeable historian on the conditions and context through which President Truman made his decisions concerning the bomb. After this meeting, Dr. Harwit apparently changed his mind on the casualty figure and notified William Detwiler, National Commander of the National American Legion in Indianapolis Indiana, in writing of his proposed changes and stating his reversal. This was taken as a snub by numerous veterans groups and some members of Congress. The result was a January 24, 1995 letter to Secretary I. Michael Heyman from 81 members of Congress (13 Democrat and 68 Republican) calling for "the immediate resignation or termination of Mr. Martin Harwit, Director of the National Air and Space Museum." The conflict then escalated and spiraled completely out of the stakeholder's control. Commander Detwiler flew to Washington, went directly to Congress, and demanded that the exhibit be canceled. In essence, this event marked the beginning of the transformation of the exhibit.

Politics manipulated the number of casualties. The downsizing is indeed revisionist and historically inaccurate if we assume that it is best to reflect on what the decision makers were actually thinking about and honestly believed to be accurate information during the period in question. For the military stakeholders, the higher number of casualties meant the act was rational, justified, moral and legitimate. While for peace groups, the lower number of casualties pointed decidedly to the notion that the atomic bombing was irrational, unjustified, immoral and illegitimate. In essence, there were other reasons and motives behind the bombing. Regardless, some information is hard to deny. The bomb dramatically halted any planned invasion in which many Allied soldiers would have died. The number is irrelevant to this symbolic battle, but for the sake of comparison here is what people reported at various times.

Projected Number of Casualties for Main Island of Japan Assault

Source of Estimates

(Code Named Operation DownFall)

Dr. Martin Harwit, Director NASM

(Advised by Dr. Barton Bernstein)

63,000 (in 1994)

General George C. Marshall

via Gen. Thomas Handy

500,000 (dead Only)

General Douglas Mac Arthur*

1,000,000

Secretary of War Stimson*

1,000,000

Internal War Department Estimate*

250,000

Admiral William Leahy, Chief of Staff*	268,000
Winston Churchill	1,000,000 (in 1947)

Figure One: Projected Casualties for Invasion of Home Islands of Japan Then and Now

Source of Estimates*	Casualty Estimates for the First 30 Days of Operation
General Marshall	31,000
Admiral Ernest King, Chief of Naval Operations	41,000
Admiral Chester Nimitz, Pacific Fleet Commander	49,000

Figure Two: Initial Projected US Casualty Count of Invasion

(Source: *Scarborough compilation of Manchester, Feis, McCullough, Dres, Spector)

These tentative numbers mean little in light of the atomic bombing. More importantly, the numbers game is a means of manipulating the justification, rationale, morality and legitimacy for the bombs rather than a clear attempt to portray history. The conflict has now shifted to focus on tentative data that can not be verified and has moved from a workable solution that addresses multiple interpretations. This data war over the number of casualties was, in effect, a smoke screen for political struggles. And once NASM changed the context to allow hindsight to creep into the discussion, the debate entered the realm of unsubstantiated opinion and pure speculation. The only thing that can undoubtedly be made clear is the stated intentions of the actors during that moment in history: saving Allied lives, regardless of the number, and bringing a quick end to the war.

Major Mistakes Made by the NASM

Conceptually this conflict was approached by NASM in a rather stereotypical way that fostered a sense of unproductive engagement that should be avoided. From a theoretical perspective, the elements that separated stakeholders were magnified by a lack of direct communication which is

a procedural error. From a strategic decision making process perspective, Smithsonian officials made the following mistakes that could have been managed differently.

First, once the conflict became unmanageable, Smithsonian officials should not have deliberately attempted to produce a cleavage between academics (historians mostly) and veterans. By allowing stakeholders to feel as though it was the "other side" that was being unreasonable and confrontational, Smithsonian officials produced a divide and conquer mentality that did no one any service and, in the end, turned more parties against NASM. By deliberately creating a political left and right wing to depict these groups, NASM did not get out of the crossfire but actually created dual animosity among most stakeholder toward them. NASM could not step aside. This tactic is inexcusable.

Second, Smithsonian officials should not have met with groups individually. This process of individual meetings led to the development of mistrust and a sense that NASM was playing various groups off one another. A facilitated discussion may have been more fruitful and a better approach to the way the exhibit was being developed. Even though the normal process of exhibit development was already somewhat modified, this adjustment would have at least allowed primary stakeholders to have had some discussions face to face. As it stood, many stakeholders began to develop unrealistic images of others. This tactic and strategy is a good example of controlled interaction through the use of unequal power so as to attempt to minimize the escalation of conflict. However, this had the opposite effect.

Some military stakeholders believe NASM officials also attempted to cloak the Institution inside the academic freedom issue in an effort to side-step complaints coming from Capitol Hill. In one sense, NASM is correct because the Smithsonian Institution is similar to a top-level academic research institute and is not subject to the political whims of the government. However, to use academic freedom as a means of creating the false impression of expertise, or to keep investigators at bay, is not appropriate. This attempt to dodge the controversy actually did more to inflame and agitate stakeholders.

Secretary Heyman also contributed to the escalation of the conflict by continuously misunderstanding veterans. For instance, in the Board meeting where he unilaterally gutted the exhibit, he is quoted throughout the press as saying the veterans "did not want analysis." This is not true. Veterans have repeatedly said that they indeed wanted analysis in the exhibit but not the type that was so blatantly biased and unsubstantiated. This idea of analytical reflection is important seeing as "the museum's goal is to explore and present the history, science, technology, and social impact of aeronautics and space flight and to investigate and exhibit the nature of the universe and the environment." (Smithsonian Year, p. 45) By focusing on critical examination of historical events, one can argue that NASM had to focus on analysis and that they repeatedly handled this major component of the *Enola Gay* exhibit in less than effective ways. In interviews I conducted *during* the conflict the feeling expressed by many military stakeholders was that the Smithsonian held the attitude that if you don't do it our way, we won't do it at all. Secretary Heyman's unprecedented unilateral action only reinforces this idea. Some peace group representatives were also surprised by his actions but did not directly attribute it to a conspiracy.

NASM moved to restrict draft scripts from public inspection. Yet, from staff meeting notes of July 5, 1994 we find "the Japanese version of 'The Last Act' script has been Federal Expressed to Japan, asking for a quick response." This directly gets to two criticisms: a Japanese bias on the part of Smithsonian personnel and the idea that artifacts should not run the development of the exhibit. Many stakeholders also criticized NASM for attempting to limit external influence to only those parties they chose. Japanese politicians had more access to NASM decision making than did ordinary Americans.

In addition, once the issue of bias arose in the original script, NASM should have moved to address this issue in a more open manner because it only reinforced the idea among stakeholders and US politicians that NASM was not handling the controversy well and that they were becoming defensive. By being continually prodded, it is likely that NASM officials were feeling resentful of external forces attempting to direct their work. It is reasonable to say that once a group produces a written product and then has it scrutinized by external people, there is a psychological tendency to get defensive. This should be recognized because the way NASM officials interacted with external groups was, at times, less than effective meaning, they were reluctant to change things unless they were forced. Rather than taking a defensive stance in regards to bias, NASM might have considered more public input. The lesson is that you can take the best and brightest minds from peace, academics, military and veterans groups and work on solutions prior to and not let them waste valuable time afterward fighting over the script. In the eyes of many stakeholders the sense of bias on the part of the curators was only amplified by their defensive and arrogant approach to the issue.

This conflict is a prime example of where conflict theory and practice can expand the knowledge and understanding of conflict regulation. This case has all the manifestations of a value conflict that is characterized by both a noticeable affective component and an overwhelming means of intangibles expressing conflict through symbolic manipulation of data rather than directly attending to value differences. The process lesson is clear. Practitioners need to attend to value differences, not only for the sake of clarity, but also for the sake of constructing common ground. Where there is no overlap in values, practitioners need to acknowledge these differences but to reinforce respect for these differences as well as continue to maintain a sense of human dignity to counter tendencies to objectify others into dehumanizing enemy images. The theoretical lesson is also clear. We need to either alter prominent ideas, such as exchange theory, or we need to place new emphasis on value theory. Relative worth does not have to have a tangible manifestation as exchange theory demands. Relative worth can be intangible yet remain within the discourse as long as people recognize that values may ultimately be one part of a larger whole, but that does not require an exchange to construct that whole.

Can this type of conflict be handled differently in the future? Yes, as long as those in the center of it realize the psychological predisposition to become defensive, that ultimately they will have to take responsibility for the problem, reduce their ego involvement in the final product and accept the idea that many groups have various interpretations of controversial events. Stakeholders and intervenors have to also realize that discussions of values, although a highly risky endeavor even for the most seasoned intervenor, can produce clarity, respect and may actually produce movement just like interests if adequate and skillful attention is paid to them. Instead of waning to one side, decision makers like NASM can focus on common ground and

then determine how to address those issues and perspectives that are divergent. This approach is also more likely to be competently handled by third parties, such as trained facilitators, thus allowing NASM to focus more on the problem and less on the numerous roles it has to play in such a problem solving process. Lastly, partial agreements were easily in sight and the expansion of the exhibit left room for multiple interpretations. In the future, subsequent conflict intervenors may reflect on this case to see where many opportunities for partial agreement were missed because stakeholder mentality was of a fixed sum nature and NASM used this to avoid rather than constructively confront the conflict.

Is It Realistic to Search for Solutions in These Types of Value Laden Public Conflicts?

Not all conflicts should be solved, much less intervened into, via a negotiation process that is directed by third parties. Some conflicts are better left alone, to be settled by taking their course. In this case, intervention would have been a realistic and helpful option. For this reason, we can focus on process adjustments as discussed in the prior section and look also to substantive lessons. For instance, one of the unquestionable mainstays of ADR process theory is that we should not negotiate issues that touch on first principles or values. This case, on its face value, appears to demonstrate this phenomenon. However, this may not be reason to declare that intervention is not recommended or that it will be useless. On the contrary, intervention can allow people to focus on issues regarding scope or meaning and not force values to be directly challenged but be used as guidelines. So there is the potential for some generation of potential solutions that focus on this type of framework. The following lessons aim to address this dynamic as well as some of the subsequent process problems identified throughout this paper.

Lesson #1: Exhibits are not Memorials

Value is lost when an exhibit takes focus off events. Building an exhibit that peace activists say is a "war memorial," or that military veterans, bipartisan members of Congress, the press and numerous non governmental organizations see as a memorial to those affected by the bomb also miss the point. War memorials belong outside museums and in their own venue. Once a memorial is attached to the NASM, it becomes hopelessly political when, in order to serve the public best, it should not. Memorials often directly assign causation and blame. This is a losing proposition for stakeholders especially peace groups.

Lesson #2 People Should Not be Ranked or Compared Against one Another

It is not possible to value one group over another. Stakeholders that focused on narrow aspects of the proposed exhibit and who put certain people first are ones who want a memorial for veterans or people who died because of the bomb. These same people did not openly acknowledge that perhaps their group focus is part of a process that ultimately does a disservice to all. Ranking leads to power plays and resentment. Museum exhibits should provide a means for people to understand the meaning of an historical event and then allow them to come to their own conclusions.

Lesson # 3 Focus on Facts and Allow Interpretation to be a Matter of Individual Thinking

The exhibit should also not convey overt political points of view, but allow competing ideas to be expressed. As we know, even facts can be interpreted differently but at least they can be presented. This does not mean a museum exhibit has to be emotionally cold, substantively sterile or matter of fact in style, but the script writers need to be conscious of how they frame their presentation to convey events in such a way that focuses on verifiable events, known and accurate data and information and most importantly provide a platform for people to educate themselves.

Lesson #4: Move from the "Curiosity in a Case" to an Interpretive Exhibit

On the other hand, the typical museum exhibit can be labeled a "curiosity in a case" as one sees with dinosaurs, moon rocks, exotic plants and people. Visitors can view the piece and be entertained by its content and move on with little or no need to reflect, analyze, evaluate or synthesize information or knowledge conveyed by the exhibit. There is little to cognitively digest and ponder once one leaves the exhibit area. Building a curiosity in a case that merely displays artifacts is a losing proposition for everyone. It does not educate museum goers as in this case it should. However, the *Enola Gay* is an "interpretive" exhibit similar to the controversial "The American West" exhibit at the Smithsonian's Museum of American History. It allows one to take information and knowledge and ponder its meaning even after one has left the exhibit. In some cases, poor writing and overt political bias interferes and detracts from the potential impact an exhibit can have, but interpretive exhibits are more beneficial than not if one knows how to construct it. However this ultimately requires a close examination of competing values. An interpretive exhibit is educational in that it requires one to critically think and is therefore likely to have a more lasting impact. Interpretive exhibits can be a winning proposition for all stakeholders.

Building an interpretive exhibit that not only provides facts but asks questions as well as conveys a sense of remembrance and reflection is a stable proposition. It humanizes the events surrounding the *Enola Gay* while maintaining the atrocities of war committed by those responsible. It does not condemn nor judge, but asks one to ponder its impact on our future. It does not provide one side with the legitimate means to claim moral authority nor to assign blame to the other. Nor does it allow one to claim victimhood and be excused from the horrors they

committed. What an interpretive focus does is present a script driven exhibit that has accompanying artifacts which help convey the story. Unfortunately, this is something people have not figured out how to do that well.

Lesson #5: Expand the Pie -- Allow For Extended Time Lines

NASM should realize that an exhibit such as the *Enola Gay* does not begin nor end in August 1945 but has a history it and a legacy after it. Context is important. There is no need to chose one emphasis over the other, even though realistic constraints such as time to construct and available space need to be considered. Expanding the time line accommodates the points that were fought over by many stakeholders. This perspective is a productive way of enriching the story and lessons behind the events.

Lesson #6: Controversy is Inevitable -- Conflict Can Be Constructive

The attitude that the conflict could have been unilaterally controlled or been put to rest actually does a disservice to exhibit goers and any subsequent informed national dialogue. Instead of trying to control or avoid this conflict NASM, officials could have considered and focused on the controversial nature of these aspects as the main ingredients of the exhibit. There is practically no discussion in any of the scripts of the controversy, even though there is. Providing some focus on the conflicting thoughts and feelings of such an exhibit allows more thoughtful inquiry as well as creates a scenario that might generate further dialogue outside the museum. As it stands in this case, the controversial dialogue was centered more on what went wrong with the development of the exhibit and less its contents.

Conclusion

These lessons are aimed specifically at the NASM's *Enola Gay* exhibit but can be tested in other public conflicts that demonstrate similar characteristics. If we have a situation that forces competing ideologies to challenge the way some public event is going to be presented, and we have a decision making body reluctant to engage in a controversy then we have the beginning stages of a similar situation where these lessons might be helpful. Some of the dynamics of the conflict could have been addressed early and the ensuing dynamics that produced unproductive after effects would not have occurred. Early structured public input could have greatly increased the chances that the Smithsonian would not have unilaterally gutted the exhibit thus doing everyone a great disservice. This case study is a failure in that it could easily have gone

differently and produced a world class yet controversial exhibit. From what happened and how it has been framed and categorized here, we can learn how to approach similar conflicts in the future.

This is also an example of not only lost opportunities and failure to adequately handle controversy. It is also an instance where conflicting ideas and values are perhaps the most potent and important aspect upon which to focus attention. Instead of trying to determine common ground issues and discussions centering on areas of divergence, NASM attempted to close the public influence on this overtly public conflict. A public conflict such as this does not have to produce reluctance, fear or anxiety if these components are perceived as a normal part of the process. How public conflicts that center on value differences are approached need to be further examined for practical as well as theoretical purposes.

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