

The University of Michigan

News and Information Services

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U-M and Smithsonian Institution
plan symposium on "Presenting History:
Museums in a Democratic Society."

EDITORS: If you are planning to attend the symposium,
contact Joanne Nesbit at (313) 747-4418 so we can assist you
with technical needs.

ANN ARBOR---Museum curators and directors, historians,
scholars and students will gather at the University of
Michigan's Rackham Auditorium on April 19 for a free, public
symposium focusing on issues that face museums when they
create exhibitions involving controversial subjects.

"Presenting History: Museums in a Democratic Society,"
co-sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution and the U-M,
will provide a forum for discussions on ways that museums
can best handle controversial subjects. The conference will
be organized in three sessions with panels comprised of the
academic and museum communities as well as military and
journalistic perspectives. The sessions are "Exhibiting
Controversial Subjects," "The Enola Gay Exhibit: A Case
Study in Controversy" and "Museums in a Democratic Society."

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Homer A. Neal, U-M vice president for research and a member of the Smithsonian's board of regents, anticipates that the symposium will provide a scholarly view of the complexities involved in developing interpretive exhibits of historical events.

"In co-sponsoring this symposium, the University hopes to facilitate a scholarly understanding of factors and forces that contribute to a 'controversial' exhibit and how the museum and the public can best respond to these forces," Neal said. "In addition, we hope the symposium will clarify the role museums take in enhancing the public's understanding of the nation's history."

Smithsonian Secretary I. Michael Heyman stated, "The Smithsonian's recent experience with its Enola Gay exhibition prompted open discussion of issues that have been, and continue to be, of concern to museum professionals for the past several years."

Controversy has engulfed several museum exhibitions in recent years, including an interpretative presentation of 19th-century landscape paintings of the American West, a recreation of a slave auction at Williamsburg and an interpretative exhibit on the history of science in the United States.

The Symposium will be broadcast on KU-band. For the morning session, adjust receivers to SBS 6/9, 95 degrees west longitude, H-polarization, with a receiving frequency of 11921.0 Mhz (signal available 8 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.). For the afternoon session, adjust receivers to SBS 6/5, 95 degrees west longitude, H-polarization, with a receiving frequency of 11823.0 Mhz (signal available 2-5:30 p.m.). Audio frequency is 6.2 and 6.8 Mhz. On the day of the uplink only, please call 313-936-2732 if difficulties are experienced.

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Presenting History: Museums in a Democratic Society
a symposium sponsored by
the Smithsonian Institution and the University of Michigan
April 19, 1995

**Rackham Auditorium
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan**

The following participants are confirmed

Welcoming Remarks

8:30 - 9:00 a.m.

James J. Duderstadt, President, University of Michigan
I. Michael Heyman, Secretary, Smithsonian Institution

Session 1: Exhibiting Controversial Subjects

9:00 - 10:15 a.m.

Neil Harris, Preston and Sterling Morton Professor of History,
University of Chicago
Betsy Broun, Director, National Museum of American Art
Cary Carson, Vice President for Research, Colonial Williamsburg
Foundation
Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Professor of Performance Studies, New
York University
Edward Linenthal, Professor of Religion and American Culture,
University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh
Harold Skramstad, Director, Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield
Village

Session 2: The Enola Gay Exhibit: A Case Study in Controversy

10:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.

Preble Stolz, Professor emeritus, University of California School of
Law, Berkeley
Thomas Crouch, Chairman, Aeronautics Department, National Air
and Space Museum
Daniel Martinez, Park Historian, U.S.S. Arizona Memorial, National
Park Service
John Shy, Professor of History, University of Michigan
Herman S. Wolk, Senior Historian, Air Force History Support Office,
Headquarters, United States Air Force

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Session 3: Museums in a Democratic Society

2:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Herman Belz, Professor of History, University of Maryland-College Park

Ellsworth Brown, President, The Carnegie; past president, American Association of Museums

Marta de la Torre, Director, Training Program, The Getty Conservation Institute

Richard Ford, Arthur F. Thurnau Professor, Chair and Professor of Anthropology, University of Michigan

Irene Hirano, Executive Director and President, Japanese American National Museum

George MacDonald, Director, Museum of Civilization, Canada

Rem Rieder, Senior Vice President and Editor, *American Journalism Review*

Barbara Clark Smith, Curator, National Museum of American History

Robert Warner, Professor of Information and Library Studies, Professor of History, and University Historian, University of Michigan; former Archivist of the United States

Wrap-Up Session

4:30 - 5:00

John D'Arms, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs; Dean, Horace H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies; Gerald F. Else Professor of Classical Studies; and Professor of History, University of Michigan

Richard Kurin, Director, Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies, Smithsonian Institution

Closing Remarks

5:00 - 5:15

Homer A. Neal, Vice President for Research, University of Michigan, and Member, Board of Regents, Smithsonian Institution