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."
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 re-creation 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 313-935-2732 if difficulties are experienced.

# # # # #
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 

OVER
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