

Fading Memories of the Atomic Bomb and Growing Fears of Nuclear War

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In 2005, sixty years after atomic bombs were dropped for the first time on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, NHK conducted a three-pronged survey among residents of Hiroshima, Japan as a whole, and the United States to investigate current feelings about the atomic bomb and views on nuclear weapons and the possibility of nuclear war sometime in the future. Ten years earlier NHK had conducted a similar survey in the three locations, and as far as the questions asked then and repeated in 2005 are concerned, we were able to gauge if and how attitudes had changed over the decade between 1995 and 2005. In the case of Hiroshima, moreover, NHK has been conducting surveys every five years since 1975. The accumulated data give us a considerably long-term view of shifting attitudes among the citizens of Hiroshima.¹

The survey results reported here are referred to as “Hiroshima,” “Japan,” and “U.S.,” respectively. Figure 1 outlines the polling methods and the ages and numbers of respondents for each survey. The questionnaires themselves and simple tabulation appear at the end of the article.

We begin by examining the kinds of changes observed in the way people remember the atomic bomb. We then look at the ways in which the atomic bombing of Hiroshima continues to reverberate in the everyday lives of the people of the city, and how they view the anti-nuclear peace movement in Japan. Next we consider differences between Japanese and American perceptions of “dropping the atom bomb” and “nuclear weapons.” Finally we analyze differences in views regarding nuclear war.²

¹ In 1972, also, NHK surveyed residents of Hiroshima to elicit feelings about the atomic bomb, but almost none of the questions in that survey was appropriate to make a sound comparison with the later surveys, so the 1972 data are not included in the present analysis.

² Knowing that American polling organizations today rarely use the direct interview method, we carried out our 2005 U.S. survey via telephone questionnaires (using random digit dialing—RDD quota). As in the previous survey, we targeted respondents only in the mainland United States. Insofar as the Japan and Hiroshima polls were conducted through direct interviews, and the American poll was done via telephone questionnaire, we were unable to set up a controlled comparison between the U.S. results and data gathered from the Japanese surveys. We decided to make a rough comparison between the U.S. results and the Japan/

Figure 1. Survey Outline

		dates	method	respondents	valid responses (%)
1975	Hiroshima	6/14–15	face-to-face interview	20 and up (900)	730 (81.1%)
1980	Hiroshima	5/31–6/1	face-to-face interview	20 and up (900)	615 (68.3%)
1985	Hiroshima	6/15–16	face-to-face interview	20 and up (900)	626 (69.6%)
1990	Hiroshima	6/2–3	face-to-face interview	20 and up (900)	605 (67.2%)
	Hiroshima	5/12–15	face-to-face interview	20 and up (900)	610 (67.8%)
1995	Japan	5/12–15	face-to-face interview	20 and up (2000)	1440 (72.0%)
	U.S.	4/22–29	face-to-face interview (quota)	18 and up (996)	—
2000	Hiroshima	6/30–7/2	face-to-face interview	20 and up (900)	636 (70.7%)
	Hiroshima	6/17–19	face-to-face interview	20 and up (900)	516 (57.3%)
2005	Japan	6/9–12	face-to-face interview	20 and up (2000)	1375 (68.8%)
	U.S.	6/8–11	telephone (RDD quota)	18 and up (1010)*	—

* The ages of respondents in the 2005 U.S. survey were aligned with those of Hiroshima and Japan, and so in the text and here in the simple tabulation we used results from U.S. survey data on those 20 and up (987 people).

As each year passes the number of Japanese with memories of their own firsthand experience of the atomic bombing grows smaller. The same is true of Americans. But that is to be expected, and it is only natural that over a time span of 60 years, individual and collective memories should fade and attitudes change.

That being true, how do today's young people, the generations that have never experienced war, perceive the issues associated with the atomic bomb? Do the youth of Japan and the United States view them differently, and if so, how? When we analyzed the survey results according to age categories, a number of interesting tendencies were unmistakably apparent.

Hiroshima survey data, and then we compared the two sets of U.S. data (from 1995 and 2005). We used that as the basis on which to analyze items that indicated significantly large differences.

Figure 2. Interest in the Atomic Bomb

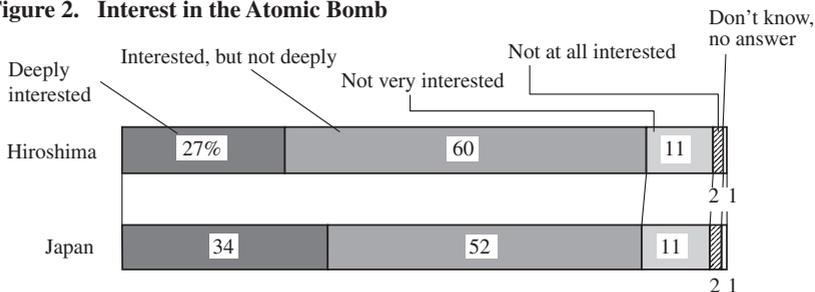
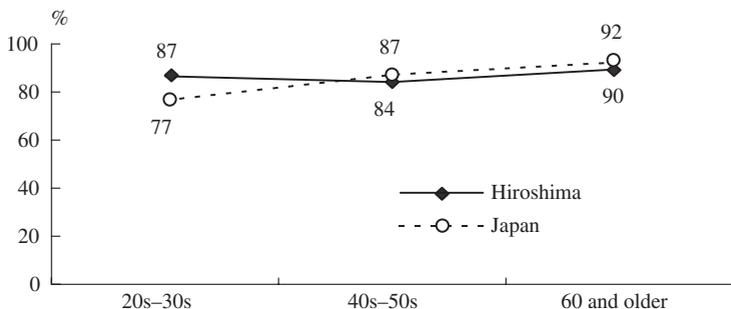


Figure 3. Interest in the Atomic Bomb (by Age)

(Deeply interested + interested, but not deeply)



TIME AND DIMMING MEMORIES

First, let us look at the “degree of interest” in the atomic bomb. When asked, “To what degree are you interested in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki 60 years ago?” the two answers “Deeply interested” or “Interested, but not deeply” together made up 87 percent of Hiroshima responses and 86 percent in Japan (Figure 2). The figure was 61 percent in the United States.

Analyzing the results by age of respondents, we observed little difference among the Hiroshima survey population, while the Japan results showed a tendency toward greater interest with increasing age (Figure 3). Differences by age group in the United States were insignificant.

Turning to the level of knowledge about the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the 2005 surveys showed that 74 percent of Hiroshima respondents knew the date—that the bomb was dropped on their city on August 6, 1945, compared with only 38 percent in Japan as a whole (Figure 4). We find, therefore, that even in Hiroshima, one person out of four does not know the date of the atomic bombing of their own city.

Figure 4. Date of Hiroshima Bombing

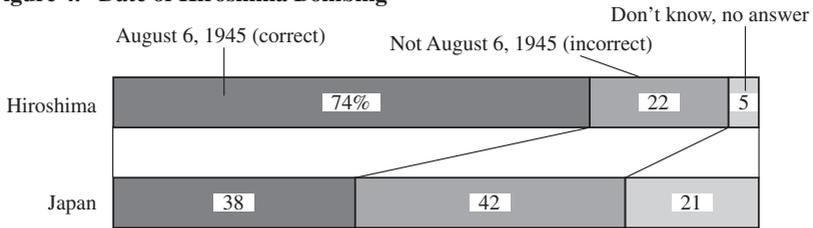


Figure 5. Correct Answer Rate on Date of Hiroshima Bombing (by age)

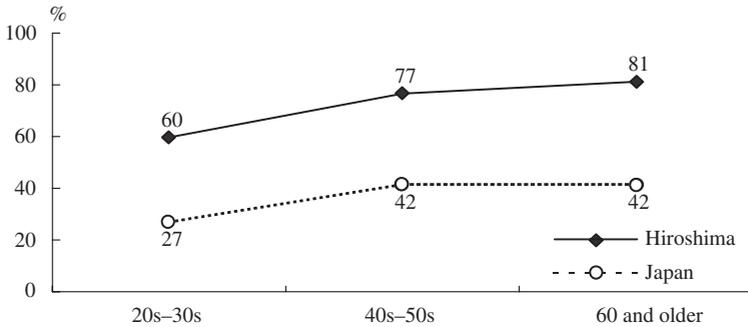
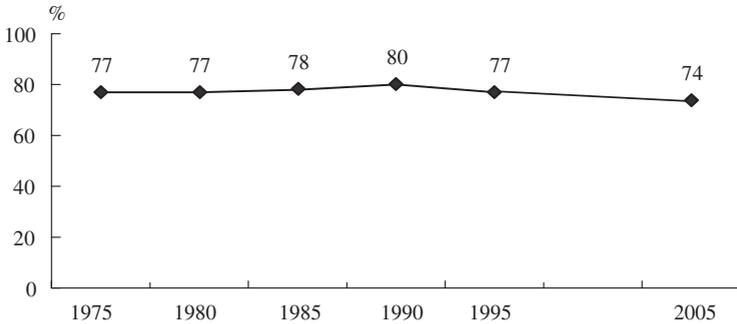


Figure 6. Correct Answer Rate on Date of Hiroshima Bombing (Hiroshima)*

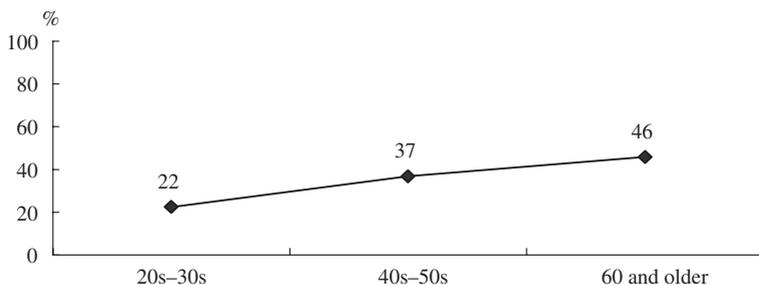


* Question not included in 2000 survey

The Hiroshima and Japan results give evidence that in general the younger the respondents, the less likely they are to provide the correct date. Among those in their 20s and 30s, 60 percent in Hiroshima and only 27 percent in Japan answered correctly (Figure 5).

In Hiroshima, the percentage of respondents who can date the bombing accurately has continued to decline, albeit slightly, over the years since the first survey in 1975 (Figure 6), falling from a peak of 80 percent in 1990 to 77 percent in 1995 and 74 percent in 2005.

Figure 7. Frequency of Conversations about the Bomb (by age) in Hiroshima (often talk about it + sometimes talk about it)



Although the survey documented a sustained, robust level of interest and concern about the atomic bomb, it also highlighted the progressive erosion of memory over the course of 60 years. Considering the tendency for people to know less about the bomb the younger they are, we can expect the memories of that time to become progressively more vague as time goes on.

Awareness of the Atomic Bomb Experience in Daily Life

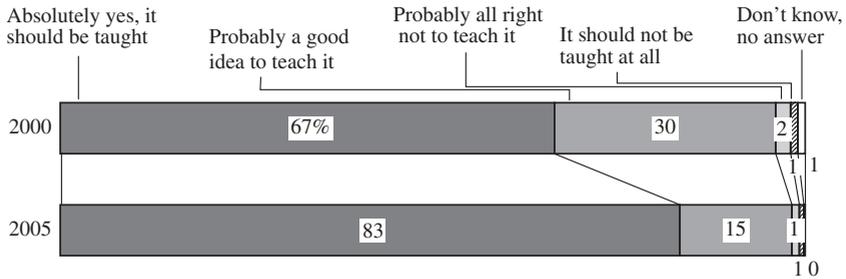
In order to learn if and to what degree residents of Hiroshima were aware, in their everyday lives, of the atomic bomb experience of the city, the questionnaire asked people living in neighborhoods that had been bombed how much they thought about that event of 60 years before. Twenty percent answered, “I think about it all the time,” and 50 percent said, “I think about it from time to time.” In other words, 70 percent of Hiroshima respondents were in some way “conscious” of the bombing. When the “constantly” plus “from time to time” responses were analyzed in terms of age categories, there were no significant differences.

The next question focused on how often atomic bomb issues came up in conversation. Asked how often they talked about the bomb at home, at work, and in other ordinary encounters, 5 percent of Hiroshima respondents answered, “Often,” while 31 percent said, “Sometimes,” making a total of 36 percent for those two answers. On the other hand, 22 percent said, “Never,” and 42 percent replied, “Only rarely,” which together makes a total of 64 percent.

Age-group analysis of the “often”/“sometimes” responses showed that the proportion of those two replies taken together decreased with decreasing age. Of everyone who gave either of those answers, 46 percent were 60 years or older, whereas only 22 percent were in their 20s or 30s (Figure 7).

In the picture that emerges from the survey results, people living in neigh-

Figure 8. Preserving the Legacy of the Bomb Experience (Hiroshima)



borhoods that were victim to the atomic bombing were conscious to some degree of what happened in 1945, but they did not talk about it very much. Also—and for our purposes this is significant—there was a clear tendency for respondents to talk less frequently about the bomb the younger they were. That factor can be expected to sustain the steady erosion of memory about the atomic bomb.

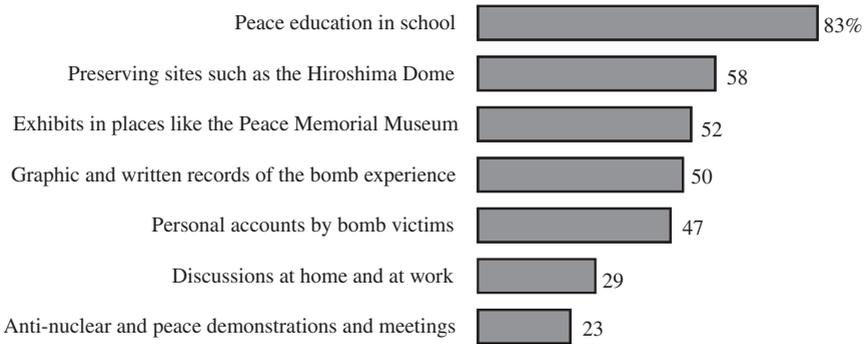
KEEPING THE LEGACY ALIVE

The survey also sought to gauge the thinking of the people of Hiroshima about keeping the legacy alive as the victims of the bomb and its aftereffects grow older and fewer in number and memories grow dimmer. Queried about whether the atomic bomb experience ought to be conveyed to succeeding generations, 83 percent in Hiroshima replied, “Absolutely yes, it should be taught.” That was considerably higher than the 67 percent who gave the same reply in the 2000 survey (Figure 8).

Those who answered either, “Absolutely yes” or “It is probably a good idea” were then asked how best to convey the experience and were allowed to give multiple answers. The answer chosen the most frequently (83 percent) was “Through peace education in the schools,” followed by, “By preserving bomb sites such as the Atomic Dome in Hiroshima” (58 percent) and “Exhibits in places such as the Peace Memorial Museum” (52 percent) (Figure 9).

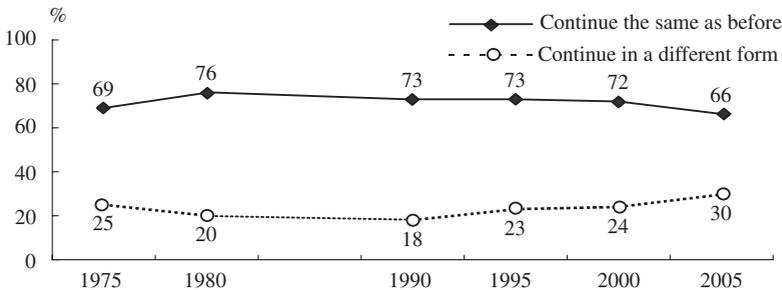
One question was aimed at clarifying attitudes regarding the commemorative and peace ceremonies held annually on Atomic Bomb Memorial Day (August 6), one of the major events conducted to keep the memory of the bomb alive. Asked how they thought the ceremony should be conducted in the future, 66 percent said, “It should continue to be conducted the same as before,” and 30 percent answered, “The ceremony should be continued but in

Figure 9. How to Preserve the Legacy of the Bomb (multi-coded)*



* For those who answered, “Absolutely yes” or “It should probably be taught” (total: 505 people)

Figure 10. Future of Peace Commemoration Ceremony Hiroshima*

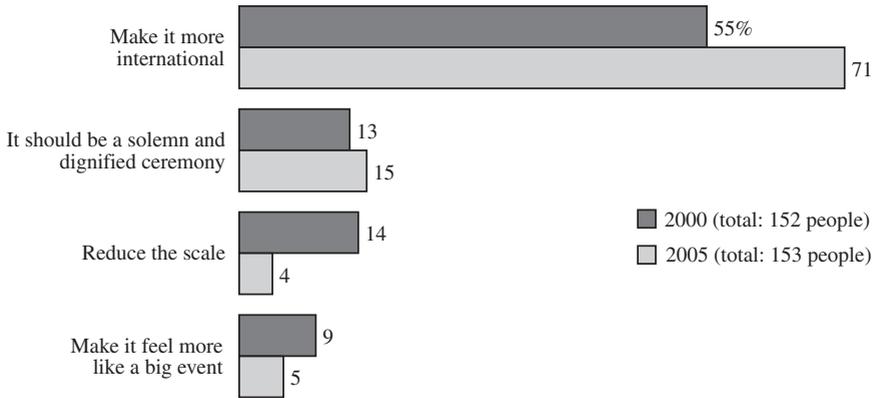


*This question not included in 1985 survey

a different format.” In this survey, then, the great majority favored keeping the ceremony in its present form, but looking at the data from 1980 onward, we observed a slight, steady decline in the number of people who have that opinion. At the same time, the number of people who want to change the format has shown a tendency to increase since 1990 (Figure 10).

Those who thought that the ceremony should be continued but in a different format were asked, “How would you change it?” and the results are shown in Figure 11. Comparing the 2000 data with those of the 2005 survey, the percentage answering that the ceremony should have “a stronger international flavor” rose from 55 percent to 71 percent, and the scale “should be reduced” replies shrank from 14 percent to 4 percent.

These results can be read as signaling a distinctly stronger sense of the importance of keeping the experience of the bomb alive by conveying it to

Figure 11. How Would You Change the Peace Ceremony?* (Hiroshima)

*For those who answered, "Continue, but in a different format"

succeeding generations. They also document a steady rise in the inclination to seek new ways to accomplish that goal.

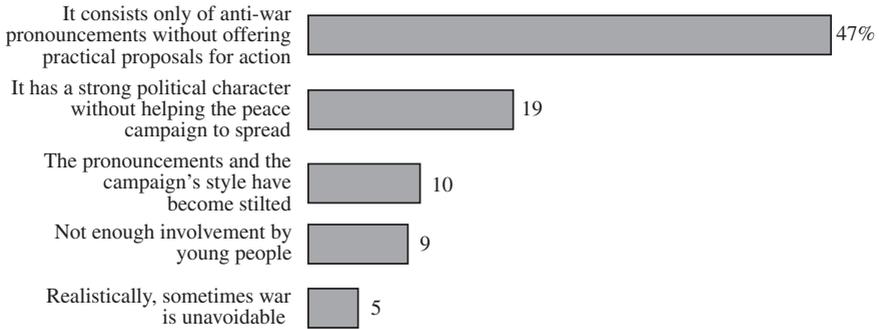
Future of the Peace Movement

Let us look more closely at thinking in Hiroshima about efforts to keep the legacy of the bomb experience alive. Respondents were asked whether they thought that the anti-nuclear peace movement in Japan since 1945 has had any effect in promoting peace in the world and checking nuclear war. Seven percent answered, "It has had a considerable impact," and 54 percent thought it has had "some impact," meaning that more than 60 percent of respondents thought Japan's peace campaign had been effective to some degree. However, 31 percent thought that it "has had little impact," and 4 percent answered that it "has had no impact whatsoever." Those who answered "little" or "no impact whatsoever" were then asked why they thought the peace campaign had been ineffectual, and their responses are shown in Figure 12. The most frequent answer, given by 47 percent of respondents, was, "Because it consists only of antiwar pronouncements without offering practical proposals for action."

Respondents were also asked how they thought the anti-nuclear peace effort ought to proceed in the future. The answer given by the largest number, 36 percent, was, "The suffering caused by the atomic bomb and nuclear war should be much more widely publicized using all kinds of media." The next largest group, 26 percent, said, "Anti-nuclear peace rhetoric is not enough; it is necessary to offer ideas for concrete action," and 21 percent replied, "More effective peace education in the schools is needed" (Figure 13).

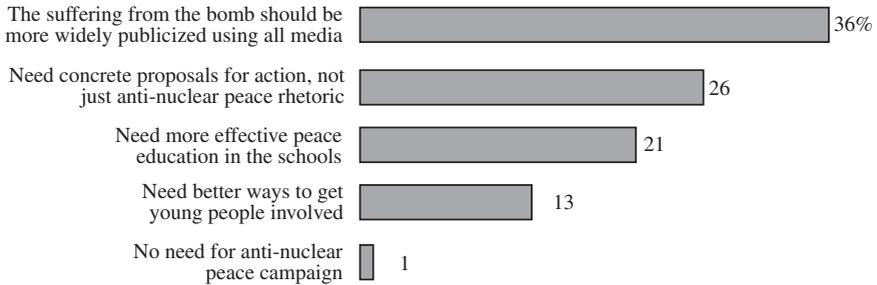
On the whole, respondents thought that Japan's anti-nuclear campaign, as

Figure 12. Why the Peace Campaign Has Not Had an Impact* (Hiroshima)



*For those who answered “little impact” or “no impact whatsoever” (total: 178 people)

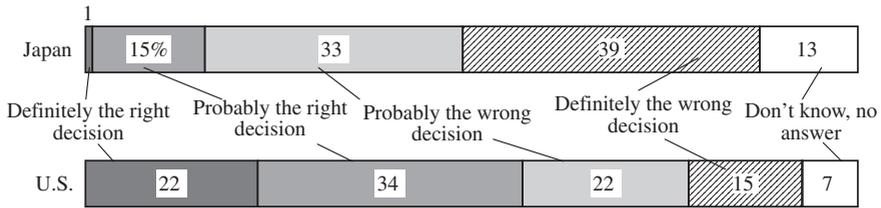
Figure 13. Future of the Peace Campaign (Hiroshima)



peace movements go, has had some effect, but a number of people replied that they thought it has not been useful. The main reason they cited was that it has produced no “concrete proposals for action” toward peace. Also, regarding the future of the anti-nuclear peace campaign, most respondents thought that in addition to wider publicity about the suffering of victims of the bomb, it is necessary to offer the world practical guidelines and a concrete basis for action in the cause of peace.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN JAPANESE AND AMERICAN THINKING

One of the objectives of the 2005 survey was to compare attitudes in the country that was bombed and in the country that dropped the bomb—Japan and the United States. Since the survey methods were different in the two countries, a

Figure 14. Using the Bomb: Right or Wrong?

direct comparison of raw data was not possible, but the different survey approaches notwithstanding, replies to certain questions revealed an unmistakable divergence in thinking between Japanese and American respondents.

Insofar as the results of the Hiroshima and Japan polls were similar, the following comparison is generally between Japan and the United States. Items on which the Hiroshima data diverge significantly from those of Japan will be noted.

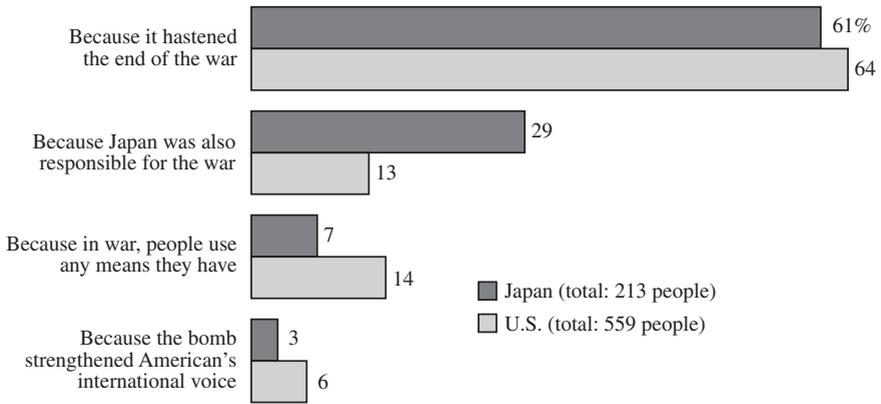
The Atomic Bomb, Right or Wrong?

At the outset respondents were queried about the right or wrong of dropping the atomic bomb. To the question of whether the United States made the right decision in bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki, 1 percent of Japan respondents answered that it was “definitely the right decision,” as opposed to 22 percent in the United States. The response that it was “probably the right decision” was given by 15 percent in Japan and 34 percent in the United States (Figure 14).

Those who replied either “definitely” or “probably” were then asked why they thought so, and those results appear in Figure 15. In both countries, more than 60 percent said, “Because it hastened the end of the war.”

Age-group analysis of the combined “definitely” and “probably” answers showed few differences among age groups in the Japan survey population, but there were comparatively large differences in the U.S. responses. Of Americans aged 60 or older, 70 percent said either “definitely” or “probably,” compared with 42 percent of respondents in their 20s or 30s. The younger they were, the fewer saw the decision as being the right one (Figure 16). One interesting difference between views in Japan and the United States, therefore, was that in the latter younger people who have not experienced war were less likely than their elders, who did experience the war, to agree to some extent with the decision to drop the bomb.

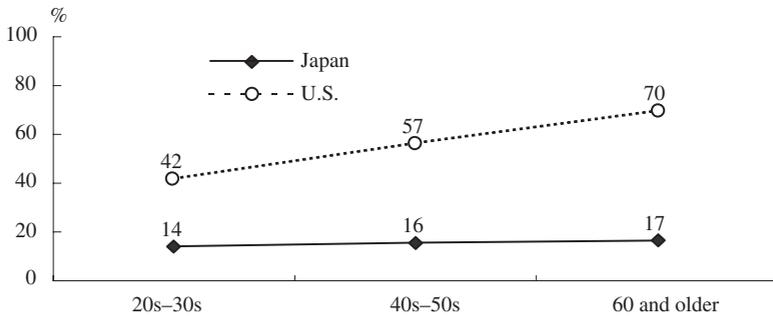
Figure 15. Reasons for Approving Use of the Bomb*



*For those who answered, “Definitely” or “Probably” it was the right decision

Figure 16. Using the Bomb: Right or Wrong? (by age)

(Definitely right decision + Probably right decision)



Nuclear Weapons

The survey then sought to clarify perceptions of nuclear weapons, including the atomic bomb. Respondents were asked what they thought should be done with the nuclear weapons that now exist in the world. Forty-four percent in Japan and 20 percent in the United States replied, “All nuclear weapons should be destroyed” (Figure 17). There was little difference in attitude by age among either Japanese or Americans.

Asked for their opinion on the use and possession of nuclear weapons, including the atomic bomb, 1 percent in Japan and 15 percent in the United States said, “It is all right to use them if necessary.” Those who replied, “It is wrong to possess or use nuclear weapons” were 78 percent and 58 percent, respectively (Figure 18).

Figure 17. Future of Nuclear Weapons

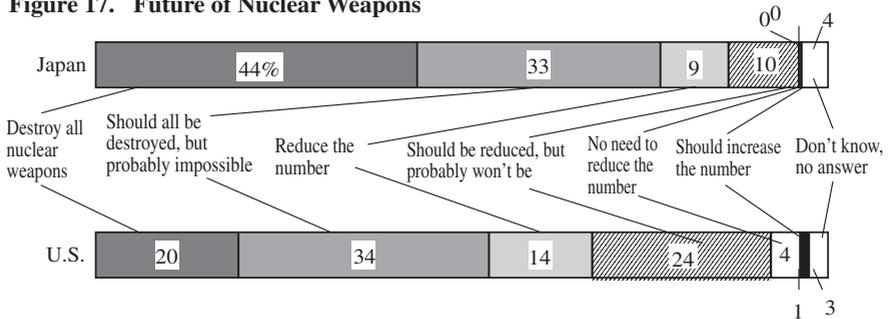


Figure 18. Possession and Use of Nuclear Weapons

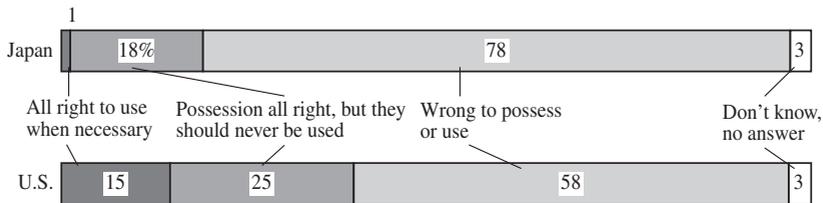
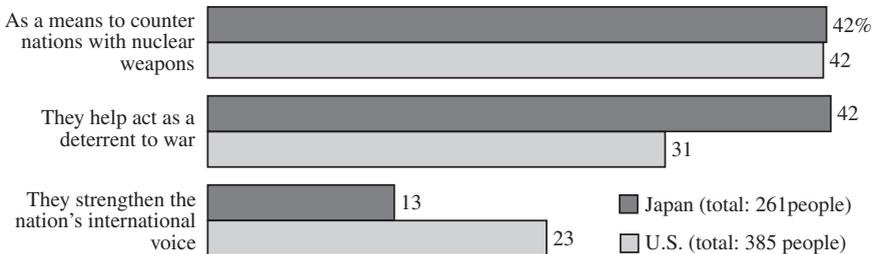


Figure 19. Why Nuclear Weapons Are Necessary*



*For those who answered, "It's all right to use them" or "Possession is all right, use is not"

Everyone who selected either, "It is all right to use nuclear weapons if necessary," or "It is all right to possess nuclear weapons but they should not be used" were then asked why they thought nuclear weapons were necessary. Over 40 percent of both Japan and U.S. respondents, in multi-coded replies, selected "Possessing nuclear weapons is a means of countering those nations that also have them." Forty-two percent of Japanese and 31 percent of Americans also marked the response, "Possessing nuclear weapons helps prevent global war" (Figure 19).

Age-group analysis of the response, "It is wrong to possess or to use nuclear weapons" to the question about attitudes toward nuclear weapons

Figure 20. Possession and Use of Nuclear Weapons (by age)
Both Use and Possession Are Wrong

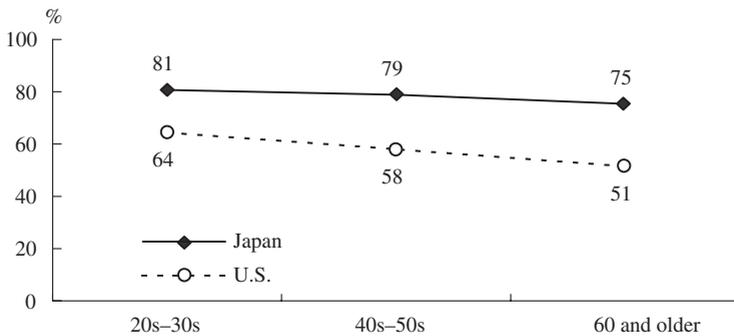
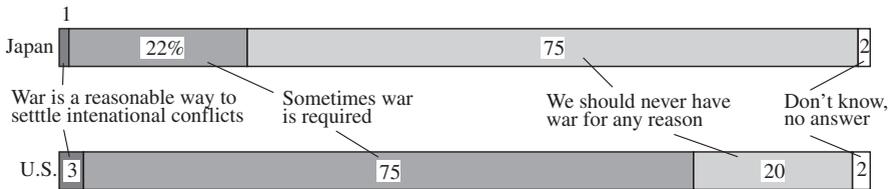


Figure 21. Attitudes Toward War



showed the same tendencies in Japan and the United States. Proportionately more of the younger respondents answered that it is wrong to possess or to use nuclear weapons (Figure 20).

Opinions about War

Moving on from views about whether using the atomic bomb was a good decision or not and about nuclear weapons, let us turn to opinions about war in general. Responses regarding opinions about war appear in Figure 21.

“War is a reasonable way to sttle international conflicts” elicited 1 percent of Japan responses and 3 percent in the United States. The response, “War is not desirable, but war is required in some cases” was selected by 22 percent in Japan but 75 percent in the United States. “We should never have war for any reason” was chosen by 75 percent in Japan and 20 percent in the United States, but in Hiroshima it was 81 percent, slightly higher than the rate for Japan as a whole. Age-group analysis showed little difference in opinion by age in the results for the two countries.

Asked if nations should be allowed to possess conventional weapons, such as tanks and warships, 40 percent in Japan and close to 80 percent in the United States answered, “Should be allowed” (Figure 22). In Hiroshima the figure was 34 percent, a little higher than in Japan.

Figure 22. Should Possession of Conventional Weapons Be Allowed?

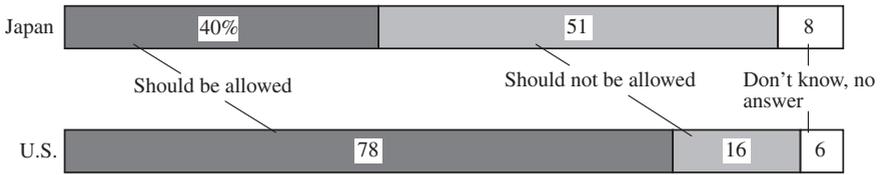
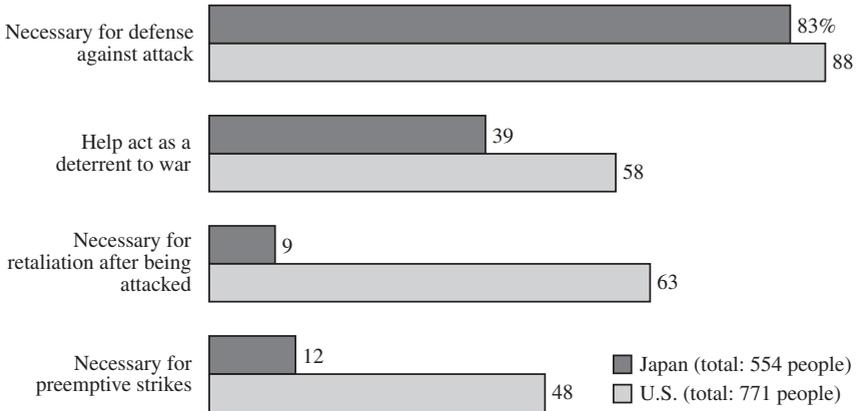


Figure 23. Why Should Conventional Weapons be Allowed? (multi-coded)*



*For those who answered that conventional weapons “should be allowed”

Figure 23 shows the results for the next question, with multi-coded replies, asking those who thought conventional weapons should be allowed, why they thought so. More than 80 percent in both Japan and the United States answered that, “They are necessary for defense,” which was the most frequently chosen reply. Between about 50 and 60 percent of Americans, moreover, also said “for retaliation after being attacked,” “as a deterrent to war,” and “for preemptive strikes.”

Shrinking Difference between Younger Japanese and Americans

So far we have noted differences between Japanese and Americans in their views on using the bomb in 1945, nuclear weapons issues, and war. When the results were analyzed by age of respondents, however, several interesting trends emerged. Among Americans, the younger the respondent, the more frequent the opinion that using the atomic bomb was the wrong decision. In other words, the pattern of response among younger Americans increasingly resem-

bled the Japanese response. The same trend was observed in the response, “It is wrong to possess or use nuclear weapons.”

Why should age make a difference in how people think about the atomic bomb and nuclear weapons? On this point, the work of Takahama Tato, who has done extensive analysis of middle school and high school history textbooks in the United States, is highly instructive.³

Takahama argues that as the years go on, accounts of the atomic bomb change and become more objective. He finds that in the 1960s, U.S. textbook accounts tend to justify the use of the atomic bomb, and in the 1970s they shift slightly to a cooler, more detached stance of simply describing the facts. Beginning in about 1986, however, items appear in the texts encouraging students to question whether there were not other options for ending the war. In Takahama’s view, the Vietnam War might have influenced the changes in attitude toward the atomic bomb that he observed in the texts.

If we consider Takahama’s conclusions as we interpret the results of the 2005 survey, it seems likely that changing textbook portrayals of the bombing, nuclear weapons, and so forth are one important factor behind the differences observed in views between age groups. We have observed a rising tendency among Americans to regard the use of the bomb as wrong the younger they are; if that trend continues, we can expect the difference between views of Japanese and Americans to keep on shrinking.

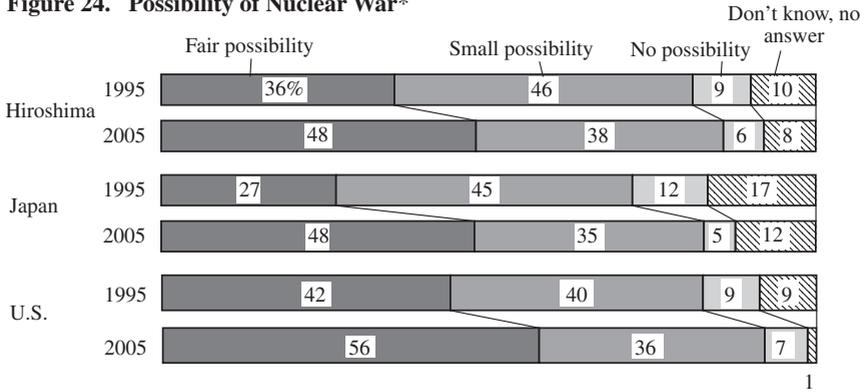
GROWING ANXIETY ABOUT NUCLEAR WAR

Regarding the possibility of nuclear war, let us look at the 2005 Hiroshima, Japan, and U.S. results in comparison with the survey results from 10 years before. The 1995 results (Figure 24) show the following: In Hiroshima, asked if they thought there was a danger of nuclear war breaking out somewhere in the world in the near future, 36 percent answered, “There is at least a fair possibility,” but a larger number, 46 percent, said, “There is only a small possibility.” In Japan as a whole, likewise, 27 percent said “a fair possibility” and 45 percent replied “only a small possibility.” There, too, the “small possibility” answer was more frequent. In the U.S. responses, the frequency was almost equal; 42 percent said “a fair possibility” and 40 percent answered “only a small possibility.”

In the 2005 Hiroshima survey the order was reversed, and the larger proportion, 48 percent, chose “a fair possibility” compared with 38 percent who

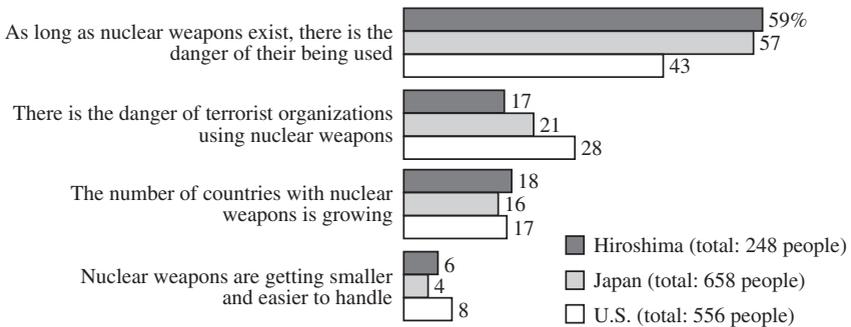
³ Takahama Tato, *Amerika no rekishi kyokasho ga oshieru Nihon no senso* [The War with Japan as Portrayed in History Textbooks in the United States] (Ascom, 2003).

Figure 24. Possibility of Nuclear War*



*The 1995 and 2005 U.S. surveys targeted people 18 and over

Figure 25. Why You Think Nuclear War Might Break Out*



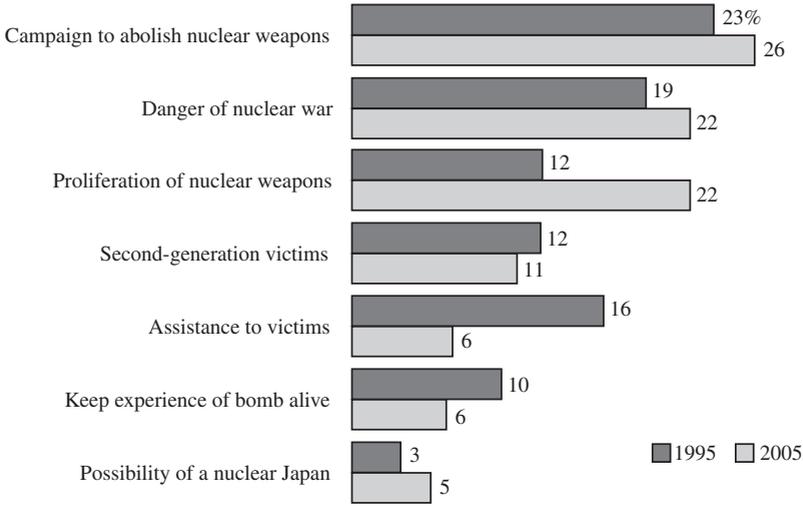
*For those who answered, “There is a fair possibility of nuclear war”

said “only a small possibility.” The same reversal was observed in the 2005 all-Japan results: 48 percent said “There is a fair possibility” while 35 percent saw “only a small possibility.” In the United States as well, 56 percent chose the “fair possibility” response.

Those who chose “a fair possibility” were asked why they thought so (Figure 25). The most frequent answer in all three polls was, “As long as nuclear weapons exist, there is the danger of their being used.” Also in all three the next most frequent response was, “There is the danger of terrorist organizations using nuclear weapons,” followed by “The number of countries with nuclear weapons is growing.”

Furthermore, as seen in Figure 26, in Hiroshima there was a change in responses to the question about what nuclear issue caused the most anxiety. Whereas in the 1995 survey 12 percent were most concerned about the

Figure 26. Important Nuclear Issues (Hiroshima)



“spread of nuclear weapons to more and more countries,” 22 percent gave that answer in 2005.

In July 2005 scientists from around the world gathered in Hiroshima for the 55th Pugwash Conference to discuss the abolition of nuclear weapons.⁴ On the last day, they issued the Hiroshima Declaration summing up the results of the discussions. The declaration stated, inter alia, that “the decade since 1995 . . . has been one of missed opportunities and a marked deterioration in global security, not least regarding the nuclear threat.” As for the reasons, it noted that there has been “little tangible progress in nuclear disarmament” and “additional states have acquired nuclear weapons.” It also made explicit reference to the danger of terrorist organizations making use of nuclear weapons.

The Pugwash Conference is convened annually in different countries, but that was the first declaration to be issued in ten years. That alone is an indication of the rising anxiety and sense of danger felt by the world’s scientists.

In addition to worry about the lack of progress in disarmament and the existence today of large numbers of nuclear weapons, now India and Pakistan have become nuclear powers, and North Korea is suspected to be well on the way to developing its own weapons. These developments, and the rise in ter-

⁴ Based on the Russell-Einstein Manifesto issued in London in 1955 highlighting the dangers posed by nuclear weapons, scientists from around the world gathered in Pugwash, a fishing village in Canada, in 1957 to discuss the problem. Since then the Pugwash Conference has been held annually in various parts of the world.

rorist acts, including the 9/11 attacks in the United States, are sources of growing anxiety in both Japan and the United States about the possibility of nuclear war.

CONCLUSION

It is clear from the results of this most recent survey that among the citizens of Hiroshima memories of the atomic bomb experience are steadily fading. The younger the respondents, furthermore, the slimmer their knowledge about the bomb, and the less frequently they talk about it in their everyday lives. We can presume that in general the memory of the bomb experience will continue to grow progressively dimmer.

Perhaps because there has emerged a sense of crisis in the realization that people are forgetting, Japanese seem to be more acutely aware of a need to keep the legacy of the bomb experience alive. One trend that can be gleaned from the survey results is the steady growth of a determination to find new ways to keep the experience of the bomb alive into the future.

We saw that positions differed somewhat between Japanese and Americans on the decision to use the bomb in 1945, on nuclear weapons, and nuclear war, but we found that the younger the American respondents were, the more their views on using the bomb and nuclear issues resembled those of Japanese.

Both Japanese and Americans felt rising anxiety about the possibility of nuclear war. Barring any development to change the situation, the existence of numerous nuclear weapons, nuclear proliferation, and fear of terrorism can be expected to continue to fuel that anxiety and make it stronger.

By continuing to survey attitudes on the atomic bomb and on nuclear weapons, dimming memories notwithstanding, we were able to confirm a growing fear of nuclear war. Through age-group analysis of responses, we realized that as time goes on, it is possible that views of Japanese and Americans will gradually converge. If these trends that have emerged from the survey results can contribute to continuing discussions on nuclear issues or Japan-U.S. relations, then our efforts will have been well invested.

(Translated by Patricia Murray)

Survey on Attitudes Toward the Atomic Bomb: Hiroshima, Japan, U.S.
(simple tabulation of survey results)

1. Purpose

To investigate attitudes in Hiroshima, in Japan nationwide, and in the U.S. regarding the atomic bomb and nuclear weapons, the results to be used as basic material for special programs.

2. Period

Hiroshima	17–19 June 2005 (Fri–Sun)
Japan	9–12 June 2005 (Thu–Sun)
U.S.	8–11 June 2005 (Wed–Sat)

3. Method

Hiroshima	Face-to-face interview
Japan	Face-to-face interview
U.S.	Phone interview (RDD quota)

4. Target population

Hiroshima	City population 20 yrs and over
Japan	National population 20 yrs and over
U.S.	Mainland Americans 18 yrs and over

5. Respondents

Hiroshima	Stratified two-stage random sampling from national registry of residents 900 people (12 people × 75 spots)
Japan	Stratified two-stage random sampling from national registry of residents 2,000 people (8–15 people × 158 spots)
U.S.	RDD, matching gender numbers only 1,010 people

6. Valid responses (%)

Hiroshima	516 (57.3%)
Japan	1,375 (68.8%)
U.S.	1,010

(Using RDD quota, no. respondents = no. valid responses)

Note: To ensure age-correspondence of responses between targeted U.S. and Hiroshima/Japan populations, U.S. survey data in the text and here in the simple tabulation pertain to respondents aged 20 and older (987).

—Interest in the atomic bombing—

Question 1. To what degree are you interested in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki 60 years ago? Choose from one of the following.

	Hiro.	JP	U.S.
1. I am deeply interested	26.9	34.0	15.4 %
2. I am interested, but I couldn't say 'deeply'	59.7	51.9	45.5
3. I am not very interested	11.0	11.3	18.6
4. I am not at all interested	1.7	1.9	18.8
5. Don't know	0.6	0.9	1.6

—Why not interested?—

Question 2. (answered by those who chose [3] or [4] in Q. 1) Why are you not very/not at all interested? Choose one.

	Hiro.	JP	U.S.
1. I don't know much about the atomic bomb issue	21.2	28.2	21.1 %
2. It happened as far back as 60 years ago	39.4	48.6	34.6
3. The victims have already been sufficiently compensated	13.6	3.3	5.4
4. It's an issue we'd do better to forget about	6.1	5.5	13.5
5. I don't think it's that big an issue	0.0	2.8	17.6
6. Other	10.6	1.7	4.1
7. Don't know/No response	9.1	9.9	3.8
(No. respondents [denominator]) =	66	181	370)

—Knowledge about the atomic bombing—

Question 3. How much do you know about the atomic bombing of Japan in World War II? For each of the following statements, please indicate whether or not you were aware of the fact.

a. Atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki			
	Hiro.	JP	U.S.
1. I knew	99.0	99.3	90.6 %
2. I didn't know	0.8	0.5	9.1
3. Don't know/No response	0.2	0.1	0.3
b. More than 200,000 people, mainly civilians, were killed in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.			
	Hiro.	JP	U.S.
1. I knew	76.6	67.7	78.0 %
2. I didn't know	19.0	29.1	21.6
3. Don't know/No response	4.5	3.2	0.4

c. Even today, there are bomb survivors who continue to suffer from the aftereffects of radiation.

	Hiro.	JP	U.S.
1. I knew	96.5	93.4	79.3 %
2. I didn't know	2.5	4.6	20.1
3. Don't know/No response	1.0	2.0	0.6

d. Hiroshima and Nagasaki today have no radiation-contaminated areas.

	Hiro.	JP	U.S.
1. I knew	50.0	35.9	18.5 %
2. I didn't know	20.7	41.5	78.2
3. Don't know/No response	29.3	22.5	3.2

—Date of Hiroshima bombing—

Question 4. Do you know when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima? Identify the correct day, month, and year:

	Hiro.	JP	U.S.
1. 6 Aug. 1945 [correct]	73.8	37.5	3.5 %
2. Some other day [incorrect]	21.5	41.9	68.8
3. Don't know/No response	4.7	20.7	27.7

—Bomb-related materials encountered (multiple answer)—

Question 5 Victims have left abundant written, graphic, and other materials and have spread information about the bombing in other ways; which of the materials listed below have you encountered? Choose all relevant items.

	Hiro.	JP	U.S.
1. Victims' written accounts of their experiences	66.7	43.9	30.2 %
2. Pictures drawn by victims	63.4	37.7	16.5
3. Victims' personal belongings	83.7	40.3	10.7
4. Victims' testimonial activities	56.8	28.3	25.1
5. Photographic records	79.8	63.6	53.2
6. News images	89.3	76.7	58.8
7. Novels and poems	60.1	33.4	24.6
8. Films and documentaries	68.4	49.3	71.5
9. Cartoon series, "Barefoot Gen"	70.9	37.8	5.5
10. The story of Sadako and the thousand cranes	67.2	18.4	14.3
11. Accounts in school textbooks	54.5	43.2	50.9
12. I've never encountered any such materials	0.2	1.7	10.3
13. Other	2.7	0.9	0.1
14. Don't know/No response	0.4	0.9	1.5

—Thoughts about the bombing in daily life—

Question 6 In your everyday life, do you ever think about the fact that you are living in a city where the atomic bomb was dropped? Choose one.

	Hiro.
1. I think about it constantly	20.2 %
2. I think about it from time to time	50.2
3. I rarely think about it	21.9
4. I never think about it	7.8
5. Don't know/No response	0.0

—The atomic bomb as a subject of conversation—

Question 7 Do you ever talk about the atomic bomb in conversation at home or at work, with neighbors or friends? Choose one.

	Hiro.
1. Frequently	5.4 %
2. Sometimes	30.8
3. Only rarely	41.9
4. Never	21.9
5. Don't know/No response	0.0

—Level of support to bombing victims—

Question 8 Do you think the support given to victims by the national and local governments for their health care and livelihood is sufficient? Choose one.

	Hiro.
1. Sufficient	13.8 %
2. More or less sufficient	31.4
3. I wouldn't call it sufficient	35.7
4. Insufficient	6.2
5. Don't know/No response	13.0

—Issues of greatest concern—

Question 9 Which atom bomb/nuclear issue is of greatest concern to you? Choose one.

	Hiro.
1. Helping the victims	6.4 %
2. The second generation—children of victims	10.5
3. Campaign to prohibit nuclear weapons	25.6
4. A nuclear-armed Japan	5.0
5. Preserving the legacy of the bomb experience	6.0
6. Nuclear proliferation	21.5
7. Danger of nuclear war	21.5

8. Other	0.6
9. Have no concerns	1.7
10. Don't know/No response	1.2

—Attitudes toward war—

Question 10 Which of the following best describes your attitude toward war? Choose one.

	Hiro.	JP	U.S.
1. War is an appropriate way to settle international conflicts	0.4	1.2	3.0 %
2. War is not desirable, but there are times when it is unavoidable	18.2	22.0	75.2
3. We should never resort to war for any reason	80.6	75.3	19.6
4. Don't know/No response	0.8	1.5	2.2

—Attitudes toward conventional weapons—

Question 11 Should nations be allowed to stock conventional weapons (in U.S., tanks, warships, and the like)? Or should such weapons not be allowed? Choose one.

	Hiro.	JP	U.S.
1. Should be allowed	34.1	40.3	78.1 %
2. Should not be allowed	59.7	51.3	16.4
3. Don't know/No response	6.2	8.4	5.5

—Possessing weapons (multiple answer)—

Question 12 (answered by those who chose [1] in Q. 11) Why do you think so? Choose all answers that apply.

	Hiro.	JP	U.S.
1. Having weapons acts as a deterrent to war	34.1	39.4	58.0 %
2. They are necessary for defense against attack by other countries or terrorist groups	78.4	82.9	87.9
3. They are necessary for retaliation for attacks by other countries or terrorist groups	10.8	9.4	62.9
4. They are necessary for preemptive strikes against other countries or terrorist groups deemed ready to attack	13.1	12.3	47.9
5. Other	1.7	0.2	0.6
6. Don't know/No response	0.6	0.7	0.8
	(no. respondents = 176	554	771)

—Possessing and using nuclear weapons—

Question 13 Which of the following best describes your opinion regarding the possession and use of nuclear weapons? Choose one.

	Hiro.	JP	U.S.
1. It is all right to use them when necessary	1.4	1.2	14.5 %
2. It is all right to possess them, but they should never be used	14.7	17.7	24.5
3. It is wrong to possess or to use them	81.6	78.3	58.0
4. Don't know/No response	2.3	2.8	3.0

—Why nuclear weapons are necessary—

Question 14 (answered by those who chose [1] or [2] in Q. 13) Why do you think nuclear weapons are necessary? Choose one.

	Hiro.	JP	U.S.
1. Having nuclear weapons helps prevent global war	32.5	42.1	30.9 %
2. Having nuclear weapons is a means of countering other nations that have them	44.6	41.8	41.6
3. They are necessary as a means to strengthen our voice internationally	16.9	12.6	22.9
4. Other	0.0	0.0	2.6
5. Don't know/No response	6.0	3.4	2.1
(no. respondents =	83	261	385)

—Future of nuclear weapons—

Question 15 Estimates of the number of nuclear weapons in the world run into the tens of thousands; what do you think about this state of affairs? Choose one.

	Hiro.	JP	U.S.
1. All nuclear weapons should be destroyed	43.2	43.9	19.5 %
2. All nuclear weapons should be destroyed, but that will probably be impossible	34.1	33.2	34.2
3. The number of nuclear weapons should be reduced	7.8	9.3	14.1
4. The number of nuclear weapons should be reduced, but that will probably be impossible	12.4	9.6	24.4
5. There is no need to reduce the number of nuclear weapons	0.6	0.3	4.0
6. The number of nuclear weapons should be increased	0.2	0.1	1.2
7. Don't know/No response	1.7	3.6	2.6

—Possibility of nuclear war—

Question 16 Do you think there is a possibility of nuclear war breaking out somewhere in the world in the near future? Choose one.

	Hiro.	JP	U.S.
1. There is at least a fair possibility	48.1	47.9	56.3 %
2. Only a small possibility	37.8	35.1	35.5
3. No possibility at all	6.2	4.8	6.8
4. Don't know/No response	7.9	12.3	1.4

—Why nuclear war might occur—

Question 17 (answered by those who chose [1] in Q. 16) Why do you think so? Choose one.

	Hiro.	JP	U.S.
1. As long as nuclear weapons exist, there is the danger of their being used	58.9	57.4	42.6 %
2. The number of countries possessing nuclear weapons is growing	17.7	15.5	16.9
3. Terrorist groups might use nuclear weapons	16.5	21.3	28.1
4. Nuclear weapons are getting smaller and easier to handle	5.6	4.0	7.9
5. Other	0.4	0.9	2.3
8. Don't know/No response	0.8	0.9	2.2
(no. respondents =	248	658	556)

—The atomic bomb—right or wrong—

Question 18 Do you think that the U.S. made the right decision or the wrong decision in dropping atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki toward the end of World War II? Choose one response that best describes your feeling.

	Hiro.	JP	U.S.
1. Definitely the right decision	2.1	0.9	22.3 %
2. Probably the right decision	13.8	14.6	34.3
3. Probably the wrong decision	37.2	33.4	21.5
4. Definitely the wrong decision	41.3	38.5	14.7
5. Don't know/No response	5.6	12.7	7.2

—Why it was the right decision—

Question 19 (answered by those who chose [1] or [2] in Q. 18) Why do you think so? Choose one.

	Hiro.	JP	U.S.
1. It hastened the end of the war	67.1	60.6	63.5 %
2. Japan also was responsible for the war	23.2	29.1	12.5

3. It gave the U.S. a stronger international voice after the war	4.9	2.8	5.9
4. In war, one uses every available means	4.9	7.0	14.3
5. Other	0.0	0.5	1.8
6. Don't know/No response	0.0	0.0	2.0
	(no. respondents = 82	213	559)

—Reflections on the bomb—

Question 20 From today's vantage point, how do you regard the American atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki? Choose one.

	Hiro.
1. Even today, it remains unforgivable	56.2 %
2. It was unavoidable	35.5
3. Don't know/No response	8.3

—Informing others about the effects of the atomic bomb—

Question 21 In your opinion, how far have people been informed about the effects of the atomic bomb—the damage caused by it and the kinds of suffering inflicted on victims? Choose one.

	Hiro.
1. Sufficiently informed	2.3 %
2. Informed to some extent	31.8
3. People haven't been told very much	59.1
4. People haven't been informed at all	5.6
5. Don't know/No response	1.2

—Assessment of the peace campaign—

Question 22 Do you think that the anti-nuclear peace campaign carried on by Japanese after World War II has had any impact in furthering peace and inhibiting nuclear war in the world? Choose one.

	Hiro.	JP
1. It has had a strong impact	7.0	11.3 %
2. It has had some impact	54.1	52.1
3. It has had almost no impact	30.8	21.5
4. It has had no impact whatsoever	3.7	2.6
5. Don't know/No response	4.5	12.4

—Why the peace campaign has not had an impact—

Question 23 (answered by those who chose [3] or [4] in Q. 22) Why do you think the anti-nuclear peace campaign has had little or no impact? Choose one.

	Hiro.	JP
1. The rhetoric and style of the campaign have become stilted	10.1	9.1 %
2. It has consisted only of antiwar peace pronouncements without offering practical proposals for action	47.2	55.3
3. It has a strong political tone, and lacks the universal appeal needed to spread	18.5	19.9
4. Not enough young people are actively involved	9.0	5.1
5. Because, realistically, there are times when war is necessary	4.5	2.4
6. Other	1.7	3.3
7. Don't know/No response	9.0	4.8
	(no. respondents = 178	331)

—Management of the peace campaign—

Question 24 How do you think the anti-nuclear peace campaign ought to be managed in the future? Choose one.

	Hiro.	JP
1. The terrible suffering caused by war and the atomic bomb should be much more widely publicized, using all kinds of media	35.5	39.7 %
2. Anti-nuclear peace rhetoric is not enough; it is necessary to offer ideas for concrete action	26.0	25.6
3. Better ways need to be found to involve more young people	13.0	8.8
4. More effective peace education in the schools is needed	20.9	16.8
5. There is no need for an anti-nuclear peace campaign	1.0	0.9
6. Other	0.6	0.5
7. Don't know/No response	3.1	7.7

—Approach to peace education—

Question 25 What do you think is the best way to educate people about peace from now on? Choose one.

	Hiro.
1. Focus on the damage and suffering caused by the atomic bomb	17.4 %
2. Focus on the historical particulars of the atomic bombing	24.0
3. Focus on postwar nuclear proliferation	14.0
4. Focus not on the atomic bomb, but on terrorism and regional conflicts/wars	40.5
5. There is no need for peace education	0.4
6. Other	0.6
7. Don't know/No response	3.1

—Passing on the experience of the atomic bomb—

Question 26 Do you think Hiroshima should pass on its experience of the atomic bombing to succeeding generations? Choose one.

	Hiro.
1. Absolutely yes	83.3 %
2. It is probably a good idea	14.5
3. It might be all right not to	1.4
4. It is perfectly all right not to	0.6
5. Don't know/No response	0.2

—How to keep the atomic bomb experience alive (multiple answer)—

Question 27 (answered by those who chose [1] or [2] in Q. 26) What do you think are the best ways to convey the experience of the atomic bombing to the next generation? Choose all answers that apply.

	Hiro.
1. Hold anti-nuclear peace meetings and demonstrations	22.6 %
2. Through graphic and written records of the victims' experiences	50.1
3. Peace education in school	83.0
4. Talk about it at home and at work	28.7
5. Hold exhibits at venues like the Peace Memorial Museum	52.1
6. Testimonials by A-bomb victims	47.1
7. Preserve sites like the Atomic Dome	58.0
8. Other	0.6
9. Don't know/No response	0.6

(no. respondents = 505)

—Continue the Peace Memorial Ceremony or not—

Question 28 Do you think the Peace Memorial Ceremony held on Atomic Bomb Memorial Day (6 August) should be continued? Choose one.

	Hiro.
1. It should continue to be held, the same as before	66.3 %
2. It should be continued but in a different format	29.7
3. Better not to hold it anymore	1.7
4. Don't know/No response	2.3

—Format of the Peace Memorial Ceremony—

Question 29 (answered by those who chose [2] in Q. 28) If the format were different, how would you change it? Choose one.

	Hiro.
1. It should be made more solemn	15.0 %
2. It should be more like a mass-appeal event	5.2
3. It should have a stronger international flavor	71.2
4. The scale should be reduced	3.9
5. Other	2.0
6. Don't know/No response	2.6
(no. respondents = 153)	

—Preserving the Atomic Dome—

Question 30 What do you think about preserving sites like the Atomic Dome? Choose one.

	Hiro.
1. They definitely must be preserved	74.6 %
2. Preserve them if possible	21.1
3. There is no great need to preserve them	3.3
4. There is no need at all to preserve them	0.4
5. Don't know/No response	0.6

—Atomic bomb experience—

Question 31 What was your personal experience of the atomic bombing? If you wish to respond, choose one.

	Hiro.
1. I am a survivor of the bomb	11.4 %
2. I am a child or grandchild of a survivor	14.0
3. I am not a survivor	73.4
4. Don't know/No response	1.2

Breakdown of Sample Population

		Hiroshima		Japan		U.S.*	
						() %	
Total		516	(100.0)	1,375	(100.0)	987	(100.0)
Sex	male	247	(47.9)	689	(50.1)	488	(49.4)
	female	269	(52.1)	686	(49.9)	499	(50.6)
Age Bracket	20s	44	(8.5)	150	(10.9)	103	(10.4)
	30s	90	(17.4)	233	(16.9)	164	(16.6)
	40s	85	(16.5)	225	(16.4)	199	(20.2)
	50s	116	(22.5)	307	(22.3)	206	(20.9)
	60s	97	(18.8)	279	(20.3)	141	(14.3)
	70 and up	84	(16.3)	181	(13.2)	153	(15.5)
	no answer	—	—	—	—	21	(2.1)
Age-Male	20s	23	(4.5)	80	(5.8)	56	(5.7)
	30s	40	(7.8)	102	(7.4)	77	(7.8)
	40s	44	(8.5)	100	(7.3)	109	(11.0)
	50s	52	(10.1)	149	(10.8)	107	(10.8)
	60s	47	(9.1)	155	(11.3)	65	(6.6)
	70 and up	41	(7.9)	103	(7.5)	68	(6.9)
Age-Female	20s	21	(4.1)	70	(5.1)	47	(4.8)
	30s	50	(9.7)	131	(9.5)	87	(8.8)
	40s	41	(7.9)	125	(9.1)	90	(9.1)
	50s	64	(12.4)	158	(11.5)	99	(10.0)
	60s	50	(9.7)	124	(9.0)	76	(7.7)
	70 and up	43	(8.3)	78	(5.7)	85	(8.6)
Male/female	no answer	—	—	—	—	21	(2.1)

*In the United States 17 males and 6 females were aged 18 or 19.