"greatest happiness principle" had the effect of suppressing certain individual rights, and thus modifying such normative building practices in favor of public well-being. By the 20th century ordinary citizens had also gained limited rights to make choices that influence public resources by serving on municipal zoning boards, historic preservation commissions and other democratic institutions. The emergence of such institutions, however, did not change the fact that, all things being equal, modern merchant princes, like the executives of WalMart, are economically rewarded for building poorly. In contrast, citizens want developers to build well to protect their own safety and optimize the quality of public life.

Because such fundamental conflict between the interests of development and those of the general public can not be seen in the perspectival pictures of reality created by architects, new laws and institutions were constructed to maintain public health, safety, and welfare. Principal among these was the professional registration of architects in the United States in the late 19th century at about the same time that architecture and engineering became legally distinct disciplines. Architects were then characterized by American lawmakers as a unique class of professional citizens who had accumulated specialized knowledge that might be employed to check the economic interests of development on behalf of the general public. In exchange for professional licensure by the state, which granted professionals a kind of limited monopoly to design public buildings, architects accepted a fiduciary responsibility to guard the public health, safety, and welfare. The result is that modern American architects are now legally and ethically bound to the interests of those who commission their services, and the competing interests of the general public.

2.3 Competing Allegiances

Serving two masters is certainly fraught with difficulty, but the matter is made even more complex because, like any discipline, architects are engaged in a discourse that strives toward autonomy. This is to say that in addition to the competing demands of the client and the general public, architects also strive to achieve creative satisfaction and recognition amongst their peers. These very human needs are usually associated with artistic practice and can also be in competition with public health, safety, and welfare.

It is within this triad of competing values and interests that modern architects practice. Each seeks to establish some kind of dynamic balance within the triad, but most opt to privilege one corner of the triangle over the others. We can refer to *production architects* as those who strive to serve the varying interests of their clients; *star architects* as those who serve the interests of art; and *eco-social architects* as those who serve the marginal interests of society and/or the environment. These categories are, of course, reductive which is to say that we should recognize that some architects strive to satisfy two, or even all three of the interests that compete for their allegiance and that a few are occasionally successful in doing so.

At issue here, however, is not so much the allegiances or intentions of architects, but how their often split allegiances lead them to edit alternative realities in one way or another. This question suggests that all architectural drawings are political because they implicitly or explicitly edit the information that public and private decision makers have available to help them decide how they want to live in the future.

3 Methods of Investigation

3.1 Empirical and Philosophical Methods

To investigate the politics of editing pictures of the future we concluded that the collection and analysis of empirical data would be more helpful than philosophical speculation because the issue at hand is not only what is rational or ethically desirable, but what architects actually design and what citizens actually perceive. It is the gap, if one exists, between the intentions of architects and the reception of citizens that should influence a philosophy of design because the size of the gap in the meaning of the picture reflects how successfully the picture produces a common end-in-view.[4]

To understand this phenomenon better we employed a research design that limited our empirical investigation to a single international architectural competition, the Connecticut Museum of Science and Exploration of 2004, in which computer generated presentation drawings, or *renderings*, were employed by the competing architects. All of the renderings employed conventional architectural techniques of representation, including linear perspective. This strategy ensured that the renderings were constructed in response to the same design problem and limited to similar graphic formats. We selected nine images from the competition materials, three each from the three competition finalists – Cesar Pelli of New York, Zaha Hadid of London, and Behnisch & Behnisch of Stuttgart.

3.2 Intention

The next step required by the research design was to review the professional literature and document statements made by the architects themselves regarding specific designs as well as general claims made by architecture critics on behalf of the designers. These were summarized as representing the intentions of the architects.

[4] The gap between the intentions of artists and the reception of the public has been studied by those engaged in *rezeption theorie*, a discourse that originated at the University of Constance. See Holub (1984).