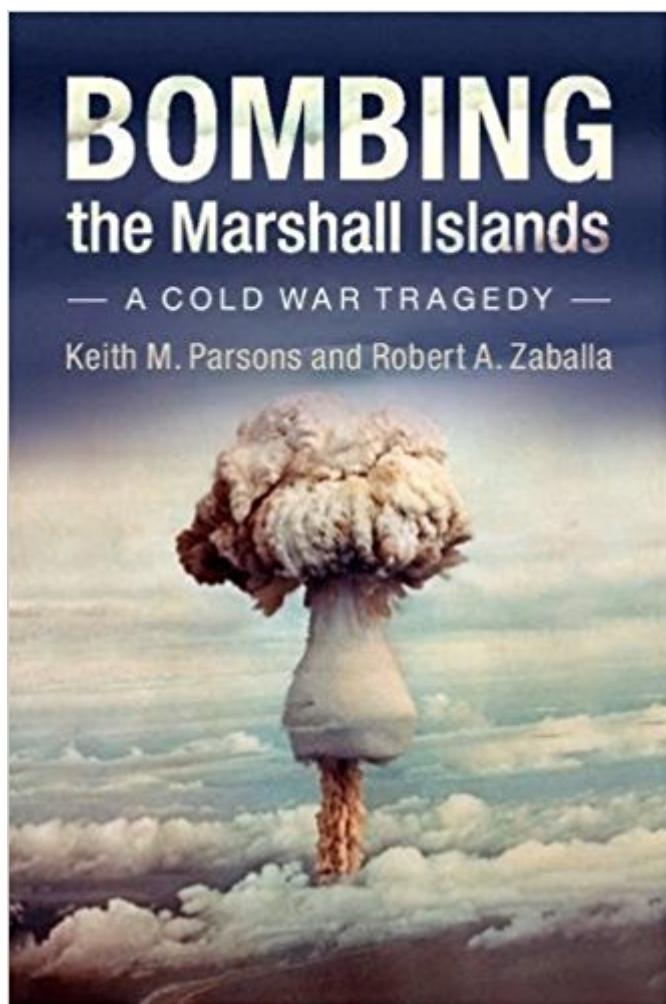


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Bombing The Marshall Islands: A Cold War Tragedy



Synopsis

During the Cold War, the United States conducted atmospheric tests of nuclear weapons in the Marshall Islands of the Pacific. The total explosive yield of these tests was 108 megatons, equivalent to the detonation of one Hiroshima bomb per day over nineteen years. These tests, particularly Castle Bravo, the largest one, had tragic consequences, including the irradiation of innocent people and the permanent displacement of many native Marshallese. Keith M. Parsons and Robert Zaballa tell the story of the development and testing of thermonuclear weapons and the effects of these tests on their victims and on the popular and intellectual culture. These events are also situated in their Cold War context and explained in terms of the prevailing hopes, fears, and beliefs of that age. In particular, the narrative highlights the obsessions and priorities of top American officials, such as Lewis L. Strauss, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission.

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Advance praise: 'Philosopher Keith M. Parsons and physicist Robert Zaballa have teamed up not only to write a brilliant narrative of the nuclear tests in the Marshall Islands, with a focus on the events experienced by the participants, but also a thoughtful meditation on contrasting historical claims, endorsing the ones that seem most reasonable to them.' Joseph M. Siracusa, The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University, Melbourne, Australia, and co-author of *A History of U.S. Nuclear Testing and Its Influence on Nuclear Thought, 1945-1963* Advance praise: 'The authors have written a highly-readable but also technically well-informed account of a time thankfully now passed - the era of atmospheric nuclear testing. It seems especially relevant today, when some

advocate a return to nuclear tests by the superpowers.' Gregg Herken, author of *Brotherhood of the Bomb: The Tangled Lives and Loyalties of Robert Oppenheimer, Ernest Lawrence, and Edward Teller*

During the Cold War, the United States conducted atmospheric tests of thermonuclear weapons in the Marshall Islands of the Pacific. By telling this fascinating but disturbing story, Keith M. Parsons and Robert Zaballa illustrate what happens when ultimate power falls into the hands of very frightened people.

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