

In a highly lucid interview offered as part of the extras, Wittersheim self-critically notes that his sympathetic portrayal of the NCA was probably influenced by a form of “Stockholm Syndrome,” which motivated him to be captivated by the sentiments and aspirations of his subjects. It is only fair to mention that Wittersheim went to great pains to include a minimal chronology of events and contexts prior to the opening credits, as well as providing a list of key events in Vanuatu’s history in the extras. He was also courageous in deciding to include an extended interview with a French political scientist who proffers a stimulating critique of the film’s content and style. Finally, it is to be celebrated that great care was taken to provide subtitles in four different languages in an effort to make the film accessible to as broad a public as possible. These added features, in combination with its topical originality, render *Grassroots* an indispensable and satisfying addition to the audiovisual record on contemporary Vanuatu.

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*Half-Lives and Half-Truths: Confronting the Radioactive Legacies of the Cold War*, edited by Barbara Rose Johnston. Santa Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research Press, 2007. ISBN 978-1-930618-82-4; x + 326 pages, tables, figures, maps, notes, references, index. US\$27.95.

While the nuclear era began with the development and use of atomic weapons by the United States near

the end of World War II, the focus of this volume is the ensuing cold war between the United States and the former Soviet Union. The book’s thirteen chapters are authored or coauthored by fifteen anthropologists, most of whom have studied the culture and history of science, documented the legacy of the cold war, and conducted research with the aim to assist communities harmed by the arms race.

The chapter by editor Barbara Rose Johnston, “Half-Lives, Half-Truths, and Other Radioactive Legacies of the Cold War,” introduces the volume. While several nations are known to have nuclear weapons (including China, France, India, Israel, Pakistan, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States), others have the technical capacity to develop them. Drawing on the nuclear history of the United States and the Soviet Union, Johnston makes several observations that are of general relevance. The nuclear programs of both nations have had and continue to have devastating consequences for the peoples involved. Uranium mining and processing, weapon production facilities, the testing of nuclear weapons, and nuclear waste dumps have created “radiogenic communities.” Such communities suffer from unseen dangers of radiological contamination, which result in an increased incidence of a variety of cancers and other illnesses, miscarriages, births of congenitally deformed children, difficulties of caring for disabled children, and cause people to live with fear and anxiety over intergenerational and other long-term and unknown effects of radiation.

Johnston notes that the ability of communities to comprehend, con-

front, and address environmental and health problems is strongly linked to and constrained by a number of variables. The victims of radioactive pollution are psychologically traumatized and often stigmatized by neighboring peoples. They are relatively powerless and have a low position in the larger scheme of things. They are often indigenous peoples living on traditional or tribal lands in remote areas and are relatively poor. Very importantly, they are deprived of basic information. National security is the most commonly advanced rationale for the development of nuclear weapons. The cold-war security state required control over the science involved, the production of weapons, and the dissemination of information. Secrecy allowed the systematic use of half-truths and misinformation to pacify and alleviate public concerns, and detached scientists caught up in their work often lost sight of basic human needs and welfare. Animals are commonly used in laboratory research, and in reference to Marshall Islanders, Johnston quotes one researcher: “these people are more like us than mice” (25)—an astounding remark that seems to suggest the view that indigenous peoples are creatures of a lower order than the rest of humanity.

Three chapters focus on the US nuclear testing program in the Pacific. Johnston’s chapter, from which the above quote was drawn, provides essential historical background. Holly M Barker, a researcher and, until 2008, adviser for the government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, reviews the major issues and problems that have challenged that small island nation. David H Price provides a

biographical sketch of Earle Reynolds, a physical anthropologist turned cold-war dissident, who gave up his career to challenge US nuclear activities in the Pacific. The remaining chapters provide a larger context, which allows a better understanding of US nuclear activities both at home and abroad during the cold-war era.

The United States has conducted nuclear tests and related activities in the Pacific Islands and the western United States, including Alaska. In the Pacific, 67 atmospheric tests were conducted at Bikini and Enewetak Atolls in the Marshall Islands between 1946 and 1958. Other tests were conducted on Johnston Island, and, in conjunction with the United Kingdom, on Christmas and Malden Islands in Kiribati. The people of Bikini and Enewetak were relocated in 1946 and 1947, respectively. Bikini Atoll remains unsafe, and its people remain alienated from their ancestral homeland yet today. The people of Enewetak began returning home in the early 1970s.

The magnitude of the tests in the Marshalls was one hundred times greater than all the tests in Nevada. The Bravo test at Enewetak on 1 March 1954 was the United States’s first hydrogen bomb and the largest weapon it ever tested. Its yield was one thousand times greater than the atomic bomb detonated at Hiroshima. Prior to Bravo, communities downwind from ground-zero locations were temporarily evacuated as a precautionary measure. That procedure was not followed with Bravo, and Islanders downwind were exposed to near-lethal doses of radioactive fallout. Initially, it was claimed that only the peoples

of two atolls, Rongelap and Uterik, were endangered, but while the harm was less severe, it was later determined that other atolls were affected. The people of Rongelap and Uterik were evacuated to the navy base at Kwajalein Atoll and became part of a secret medical study. A control population of Islanders not present on Rongelap and Uterik on that fateful day, as well as the exposed people, became the subjects of medical observation and research, without their consent. The Uterik community was able to return home within three years. While US officials and scientists knew Rongelap was still dangerously contaminated, the entire Rongelap community was returned to the atoll in 1957. After the control population began to experience severe medical problems, and with the assistance of Greenpeace, the Rongelapese initiated their own relocation to an island in Kwajalein Atoll in 1985.

In 1986, the Republic of the Marshall Islands became a self-governing state in free association with the United States. Under the provisions of the compact of free association, the United States allotted a fixed monetary sum in compensation for injuries and property damage caused by its nuclear program and allowed the republic to petition the US Congress for further redress in the future. The legal battles are ongoing and will continue for decades.

The other chapters of this volume focus on concerns in the western United States and the former Soviet Union. The Nevada Test Site experienced more nuclear detonations than any other place on the earth (100 atmospheric and 800 underground

tests), and communities in Nevada and neighboring states have suffered illnesses and a range of disorders similar to those in the Marshall Islands. Nuclear wastes from Nevada were dumped in Alaska. Uranium mining in four states has had devastating consequences for miners, mostly Native Americans, and abandoned, contaminated mines remain scattered over the landscape today. The production of weapons-grade nuclear fuel and the detonating devices for hydrogen bombs at the Hanford site in Washington State and Rocky Flats near Denver, Colorado, have left large areas of contamination.

The best-known nuclear accident in the Soviet Union occurred in Chernobyl in 1986 when a nuclear power plant exploded, releasing radioactive fallout that spread over the western Soviet Union, Europe, and the eastern United States. Not widely known, three decades earlier a series of disasters occurred at Chelyabinsk near the Ural Mountains. The radioactive contamination was double that of Chernobyl, and the fallout affected a quarter of a million people.

While the French nuclear program in French Polynesia is not discussed in the volume, the history of nuclear testing there has many parallels with events in the Marshall Islands.

In the volume's concluding chapter, Laura Nader and Hugh Gusterson review the issues discussed by the several authors, highlight some of the conclusions that may be drawn from the volume, and comment on how anthropology has been transformed in the latter half of the twentieth century. Prior to World War II, the Pacific was divided among several colonial pow-

ers. Margaret Mead was representative of anthropologists in that era, one in which Pacific Islanders and other indigenous peoples around the world were seen as relatively unchanged by time and useful as convenient laboratories for anthropological inquiry. The existing world order went unquestioned, and Mead and others in academia were comfortable to support the interests of the United States during the war and the immediate post-war years. The Vietnam War, and now the conflict in Iraq, have challenged the conscience of many Americans and brought US foreign policy under increased scrutiny and criticism. A greater number of anthropologists and other members of the academy today are more aware and concerned about the ethical issues inherent in research with their fellow human beings.

The volume will interest readers concerned about the nuclear dilemmas that face the people and nations of the world today, and it raises issues that are crucial to the practice of anthropology. The various chapters are diverse in content and style, but they are well organized and form a coherent whole. The main theme of the volume is captured in a quote from Edward Liebow, the author of the chapter on Hanford: “wherever a nuclear power glows on the world map, one can expect to find a marginalized region within its national boundaries or colonial territories with its very own bands of nuclear Natives” (145).

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*Texts and Contexts: Reflections in Pacific Islands Historiography*, edited by Doug Munro and Brij V Lal. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006. ISBN 978-0-8248-2942-1; 264 pages, notes, index. US\$47.00.

In *Texts and Contexts: Reflections in Pacific Islands Historiography*, editors Doug Munro and Brij V Lal present a series of essays that explore the rise of Pacific Islands history as a field of study from 1938 to 1992. While the temporal scope could have expanded to include older and more recent studies, this era was chosen because its authors generated what the editors call the “foundational texts” of the field (1). Sixteen contributors, comprising anthropologists and historians, thus examine thirty different authors whose texts initially shaped the meaning and direction of Pacific Islands history. To what degree contextual issues of audience response, disciplinary training, personal interest, and scholarly credibility actually informed these texts is a matter taken up by the contributors. As the editors note, “each contributor was asked to examine a particular text—in some cases, complementary texts—in the context of its/their inception, production, and intellectual influence on a particular field of research” (6). A few texts were produced by independent scholars and nonacademics, whose works might even be considered primary sources of the twentieth century. But the majority of these texts were histories written by former colonial officials, many of whom held academic positions in or professional affiliations with the Australian National University (ANU).

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30 day returns - Buyer pays return postage | Returns policy. Half-Lives & Half-Truths Confronting the Radioactive Legacies of the Cold War by Barbara Rose Johnston 9781930618824 (Paperback, 2007) Delivery UK delivery is usually within 8 to 10 working days. International delivery varies by country, please see the Wordery store help page for details. Read full description. See details and exclusions - Half-Lives & Half-Truths Confronting the Radioactive Legacies o 978193061. See all 4 brand new listings. Qty Half-lives and Half-truths and Other Radioactive Legacies of the Cold War. BR Johnston. Half-Lives and Half-Truths: Confronting the radioactive legacies of the cold 2007. 95\*. 2007. Half-lives and half-truths: confronting the radioactive legacies of the cold war. BR Johnston. School for Advanced Research/University of New Mexico Press, 2007. Half-Lives and Half-Truths : Confronting the Radioactive Legacies of the Cold War (2007, Trade Paperback) at the best online prices at eBay! Free shipping for many products! Product Information. The long Cold War of the twentieth century has ended, but only now are the poisonous legacies of that "first nuclear age" coming to light. Activists and anthropologists, the authors of this volume reveal the devastating, complex, and long-term environmental health problems afflicting the people who worked in uranium mining and processing, lived in regions dedicated to the construction of nuclear weapons or participated, often unknowingly, in radiation experiments.