

# Making of the Atomic Bomb

By Richard Rhodes

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## Making of the Atomic Bomb By Richard Rhodes

Twenty-five years after its initial publication, *The Making of the Atomic Bomb* remains the definitive history of nuclear weapons and the Manhattan Project. From the turn-of-the-century discovery of nuclear energy to the dropping of the first bombs on Japan, Richard Rhodes's Pulitzer Prize-winning book details the science, the people, and the socio-political realities that led to the development of the atomic bomb.

This sweeping account begins in the 19th century, with the discovery of nuclear fission, and continues to World War Two and the Americans' race to beat Hitler's Nazis. That competition launched the Manhattan Project and the nearly overnight construction of a vast military-industrial complex that culminated in the fateful dropping of the first bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Reading like a character-driven suspense novel, the book introduces the players in this saga of physics, politics, and human psychology—from FDR and Einstein to the visionary scientists who pioneered quantum theory and the application of thermonuclear fission, including Planck, Szilard, Bohr, Oppenheimer, Fermi, Teller, Meitner, von Neumann, and Lawrence.

From nuclear power's earliest foreshadowing in the work of H.G. Wells to the bright glare of Trinity at Alamogordo and the arms race of the Cold War, this dread invention forever changed the course of human history, and *The Making of The Atomic Bomb* provides a panoramic backdrop for that story.

Richard Rhodes's ability to craft compelling biographical portraits is matched only by his rigorous scholarship. Told in rich human, political, and scientific detail that any reader can follow, *The Making of the Atomic Bomb* is a thought-provoking and masterful work.

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## **Editorial Review**

Amazon.com Review

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award, and the National Book Critics Circle Award.

From Publishers Weekly

This winner of the NBCC, NBA and Pulitzer prizes is being published to coincide with the 50th anniversaries of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the hardcover publication of Rhodes's new book, *Dark Sun: The Making of the Hydrogen Bomb*.

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From Library Journal

This is a massive work dealing with the history of the people and the science that preceded and then made possible the development of the atomic bomb. Heavily biographical, the book provides portraits of the many players from Szilard and Einstein to Oppenheimer. Rhodes includes detailed explanations of the various scientific discoveries beginning in the late 19th century which culminated in the Manhattan Project. The book is heavily documented and includes a 13-page bibliography. This is a definitive work, well written, with a gripping story. It is not an easy book to read, but it is well worth the effort. BOMC alternate. Hilary D. Burton, Lawrence Livermore National Lab., Livermore, Cal.

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**From reader reviews:**

**Lowell Oliver:**

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