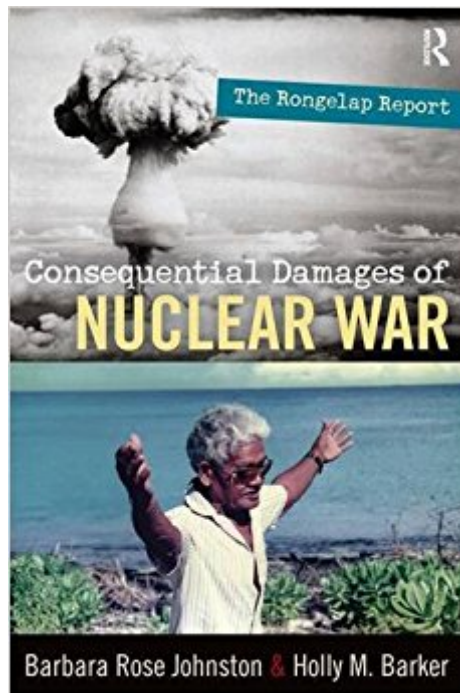




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Consequential Damages Of Nuclear War: The Rongelap Report



Synopsis

The hydrogen test-bomb Bravo, dropped on the Marshall Islands in 1954, had enormous consequences for the Rongelap people. Anthropologists Barbara Rose Johnston and Holly Barker provide incontrovertible evidence of physical and financial damages to individuals and cultural and psycho-social damages to the community through use of declassified government documents, oral histories and ethnographic research, conducted with the Marshallese community within a unique collaborative framework. Their work helped produce a \$1 billion award by the Nuclear Claims Tribunal and raises issues of bioethics, government secrecy, human rights, military testing, and academic activism. The report, reproduced here with accompanying materials, should be read by everyone concerned with the effects of nuclear war and is an essential text for courses in history, environmental studies, bioethics, human rights, and related subjects.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"When I began to read this book, I found I could not put it away. In this gripping story, Johnston and Barker make a persuasive argument for redefining the compensation principle to include community damages associated with the loss of a way of life. Contending with the classification and reclassification of key government documents, and incorporating persuasive evidence from oral histories, archival research, and cultural landscape mapping, they render in powerful detail." —Edward Liebow, Battelle Centers for Public Health Research and Evaluation "This powerful, sad, outrageous, important, spellbinding book is a dramatic history of America's second nuclear war, the one the United States Government waged with nuclear weapons

tests in the Pacific against the Marshallese people, and with our own military personnel—the Atomic Veterans, who were ordered to participate in the atomic and hydrogen bomb tests of the postwar years. The consequences were devastating for both the natives and the service personnel, the cover-ups were criminal, and the lessons are palpable and relevant today. The Rongelap Report is at the top of my 2008 required reading list for both candidates and voters. That includes you!"

—Martin J. Sherwin, PhD, Pulitzer Prize winning author (with Kai Bird) of *American Prometheus: The Triumph and Tragedy of J. Robert Oppenheimer*"Consequential Damages of Nuclear War lays bare one of the cruelest chapters in modern history, where the people of the Marshall Islands were used as unwitting human guinea pigs for 67 nuclear blasts in the South Pacific, their homelands drenched by wave after wave of radioactive fallout and its deadly legacy of cancers, birth defects and infertility. Here is a disturbing and unflinching chronicle of official lies, broken promises and felonious governmental indifference to horrific human suffering, cultural genocide and environmental ruin. Yet this terrifying story is not entirely grim. The pages pulse with the defiant voices of the Marshallese people themselves, who courageously refuse to play the passive role of atomic victims. At last, Johnston and Barker have given us a transcendent tribute to the heroic resistance of these nuclear nomads."

—Jeffrey St. Clair, co-editor of *CounterPunch*; author, *Born Under a Bad Sky*"In this riveting study, Johnston and Barker show what happens when a defenseless population is exposed to radiation from a bomb 1000 times as large as the one that destroyed Hiroshima. The 1954 Bravo test in the Marshall Islands damaged not only people's bodies but the way of life of entire communities as well as the natural environment. Following the bomb test, the U.S. government subjected the victims to decades of medical testing as part of a secret military research project—even going so far as to deliberately put evacuees back into harm's way for further exposure. With extraordinary sensitivity and insight, the authors draw upon extensive scientific and medical research but do so in a way that allows the Marshallese to tell their own story. The experience of those exposed is sadly reminiscent of that of survivors in Hiroshima and Nagasaki who were also studied but not treated by U.S. occupation authorities, and who suffered from recurrent health concerns, psychological damage, social ostracism, sexual humiliation, miscarriages and birth defects, and perpetual worries about the well-being of future generations. The *Consequential Damages of Nuclear War* is not only a model community study; it is a must read for anyone interested in the impact of nuclear weapons' use upon any human society."

—Peter J. Kuznick, Professor of History and Director, Nuclear Studies Institute, American University"Consequential Damages of Nuclear War is a testament to why anthropology matters. Barbara Rose Johnston and Holly Barker bring heart, mind, memory and conscience to

document a tragic past that many would have preferred be forgotten. Their careful scholarship and representative activism boldly declares the promise of engaged applied anthropology." —David Price, Saint Martin's University

"This powerful, sad, outrageous, important, spellbinding book is a dramatic history of America's second nuclear war, the one the United States Government waged with nuclear weapons tests in the Pacific against the Marshallese people, and with our own military personnel-the Atomic Veterans, who were ordered to participate in the atomic and hydrogen bomb tests of the postwar years. The consequences were devastating for both the natives and service personnel alike, the cover-ups were criminal, and the lessons are palpable and relevant today. The Rongelap Report is at the top of my 2008 required reading list for both candidates and voters. That includes you!"

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This outstanding work documents the suffering of the people of Rongalap in the Marshall Islands as the unwitting guinea pigs of the U.S. nuclear weapons testing program, is thorough and scholarly, yet compassionate and highly readable. It tells through the words of the survivors how they watched in terror as the sky was ripped apart and turned strange colors and how the fallout from Castle Bravo on Bikini atoll rained down on them; how they ate and drank the contaminated food and

water; how their skin burned and hair fell out; how they died by the score from thyroid and other cancers, gave birth to unspeakably deformed children and were displaced from their homelands - only to be intentionally subjected to further radiation when they were returned. It describes how they were humiliated and subjected to painful procedures as medical study subjects, yet their symptoms and illnesses not treated. The report argues for fair compensation for the innocent and abused people of Rongelap whose permission was never sought for the U.S. to use their atolls to test their bombs and study the effects of radiation at a safe distance from their own lands. To this day they remain displaced and stigmatized. It is incomprehensible that Americans could callously and intentionally impose so much suffering on fellow human beings. It illustrates the moral failure of a mighty nation in its abuse of a weaker one. This is a sobering book and one that everyone should read.

this book shows what can happen when we do not love our brother as our self. sad but true. read so we never do this again.

thank you, just as described.

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