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THE FIRST LECTURES ON HOW TO BUILD AN ATOMIC BOMB



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ROBERT SERBER

UPDATED, WITH A NEW INTRODUCTION BY RICHARD RHODES

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Los Alamos Primer

John Canaday

Los Alamos Primer:

The Los Alamos Primer Robert Serber, 2020 More than seventy years ago American forces exploded the first atomic bombs over the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki causing great physical and human destruction The young scientists at Los Alamos who developed the bombs which were nicknamed Little Boy and Fat Man were introduced to the basic principles and goals of the project in March 1943 at a crash course in new weapons technology The lecturer was physicist Robert Serber J Robert Oppenheimer's prot g and the scientists learned that their job was to design and build the world's first atomic bombs Notes on Serber's lectures were gathered into a mimeographed document titled TheLos Alamos Primer which was supplied to all incoming scientific staff The Primer remained classified for decades after the war Published for the first time in 1992 the Primer offers contemporary readers a better understanding of the origins of nuclear weapons Serber's preface vividly conveys the mingled excitement uncertainty and intensity felt by the Manhattan Project scientists This edition includes an updated introduction by Pulitzer Prize winning historian Richard Rhodes A seminal publication on a turning point in human history The Los Alamos Primer reveals just how much was known and how terrifyingly much was unknown midway through the Manhattan Project No other seminar anywhere has had greater historical consequences

The Los Alamos Primer Robert Serber, In April 1943 at a new secret laboratory on a mesa in the high New Mexican desert a crowd of the most brilliant young scientists in America heard five stunning lectures that summed up everything the world knew about how to build an atomic bomb The lecturer was Robert Serber a theoretical physicist and proteg of J Robert Oppenheimer the laboratory was Los Alamos Serber's lectures assembled in note form and mimeographed became the legendary LA 1 the Los Alamos Primer the first document passed out to new recruits to the wartime enterprise classified Secret Limited for twenty years after the Second World War Source of description unknown Critical Assembly Lillian Hoddeson, Gordon Baym, 1993-05-28 This 1993 book explores how the critical assembly of scientists at Los Alamos created the first atomic bombs Particle Physics: a Los Alamos Primer Necia Grant Cooper, Geoffrey B. West, 1988 **Particle Physics** Necia Grant Cooper, Geoffrey B. West, 1988-04-29 This book explains the emergence of a profoundly new understanding of the fundamental forces of Nature Deception at Los Alamos A.L. Provost, 2006-06 At the beginning of World War II Germany and America were in a race to develop the atomic bomb The clear prize was European domination For reasons of security at the end of 1942 the Americans moved their nuclear weapons research and development program to a barren rocky New Mexico plateau called Los Alamos Suddenly Adolf Hitler realized he was going to come in second place in a race that had no second place With the Fuhrer's back against an atomic wall in desperation he sent his top spy to New Mexico His mission To steal America's atomic bomb secrets This is the story of Gunter Fleiss The Nuclear Muse John Canaday, 2000 Canaday a poet and playwright who has been a Watson Fellow and a Starbuck Fellow in Poetry at Boston University analyzes a variety of texts produced by physicists before during and after WWII including Niels Bohr s The

Ouantum Postulate the technical lectures used for training at Los Alamos scientist's descriptions of their work and of the Trinity test and Leo Szilard's postwar novella The Voice of the Dolphins He looks at physicists use of figurative language in the development of quantum theory and examines the role played by the rhetorics of exploration and religion in the construction of the Los Alamos community Includes bandw historical photos Annotation copyrighted by Book News Inc The History and Science of the Manhattan Project Bruce Cameron Reed, 2019-02-19 The development of atomic bombs under the auspices of the U S Army s Manhattan Project during World War II is considered to be the outstanding news story of the twentieth century In this book a physicist and expert on the history of the Project presents a comprehensive overview of this momentous achievement The first three chapters cover the history of nuclear physics from the discovery of radioactivity to the discovery of fission and would be ideal for instructors of a sophomore level Modern Physics course Student level exercises at the ends of the chapters are accompanied by answers Chapter 7 covers the physics of first generation fission weapons at a similar level again accompanied by exercises and answers For the interested layman and for non science students and instructors the book includes extensive qualitative material on the history organization implementation and results of the Manhattan Project and the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombing missions The reader also learns about the legacy of the Project as reflected in the current world stockpiles of nuclear weapons This second edition contains important revisions and additions including a new chapter on the German atomic bomb program and new sections on British and Canadian contributions to the Manhattan project and on feed materials Several other sections have been expanded reader feedback has been helpful in introducing minor corrections and improved explanations and last but not least the second edition includes a detailed index The Physics of the Manhattan Project Bruce Cameron Reed, 2021-01-02 The development of nuclear weapons during the Manhattan Project is one of the most significant scientific events of the twentieth century This revised and updated 4th edition explores the challenges that faced the scientists and engineers of the Manhattan Project It gives a clear introduction to fission weapons at the level of an upper year undergraduate physics student by examining the details of nuclear reactions their energy release analytic and numerical models of the fission process how critical masses can be estimated how fissile materials are produced and what factors complicate bomb design An extensive list of references and a number of exercises for self study are included Revisions to this fourth edition include many upgrades and new sections Improvements are made to among other things the analysis of the physics of the fission barrier the time dependent simulation of the explosion of a nuclear weapon and the discussion of tamped bomb cores New sections cover for example composite bomb cores approximate methods for various of the calculations presented and the physics of the polonium beryllium neutron initiators used to trigger the bombs The author delivers in this book an unparalleled clear and comprehensive treatment of the physics behind the Manhattan project

The Manhattan Project Cynthia C. Kelly,2020-07-07 On the seventy fifth anniversary of the first atomic bomb discover

new reflections on the Manhattan Project from President Barack Obama hibakusha survivors and the modern day mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki The creation of the atomic bomb during World War II codenamed the Manhattan Project was one of the most significant and clandestine scientific undertakings of the 20th century It forever changed the nature of war and cast a shadow over civilization Born out of a small research program that began in 1939 the Manhattan Project would eventually employ nearly 600 000 people and cost about 2 billon 28 5 billion in 2020 all while operating under a shroud of complete secrecy On the 75th anniversary of this profoundly crucial moment in history this newest edition of The Manhattan Project is updated with writings and reflections from the past decade and a half This groundbreaking collection of essays articles documents and excerpts from histories biographies plays novels letters and oral histories remains the most comprehensive collection of primary source material of the atomic bomb *Encyclopedia of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* Rodney Carlisle, 2015-03-26 From references to secret agents in The Art of War in 400 B C E to the Bush administration s ongoing War on Terrorism espionage has always been an essential part of state security policies This illustrated encyclopedia traces the fascinating stories of spies intelligence and counterintelligence throughout history both internationally and in the United States Written specifically for students and general readers by scholars former intelligence officers and other experts Encyclopedia of Intelligence and Counterintelligence provides a unique background perspective for viewing history and current events In easy to understand non technical language it explains how espionage works as a function of national policy traces the roots of national security profiles key intelligence leaders agents and double agents discusses intelligence concepts and techniques and profiles the security organizations and intelligence history and policies of nations around the world As a special feature the set also includes forewords by former CIA Director Robert M Gates and former KGB Major General Oleg Kalugin that help clarify the evolution of intelligence and counterintelligence and their crucial roles in world Alvarez: Adventures of a Physicist Luis W. Alvarez, 2019-08-08 During World War II Luis W Alvarez affairs today participated in the Allies development of radar at the MIT Radiation Laboratory and of the atomic bomb at Los Alamos He then worked as an experimental physicist on cyclotrons particle accelerators and bubble chambers at UC Berkeley with Ernest Lawrence Later in life he used cosmic rays to X ray an Egyptian pyramid developed a new theory about the extinction of the dinosaurs and won the 1968 Nobel prize in physics for his work on elementary particles In this autobiography Alvarez shares insights on the process of scientific discovery risk taking in science and how theoretical and experimental physics interact A delightful autobiography A fascinating book It should be read by everyone who is interested in science and adventure or who just wants to meet one of our most fascinating contemporaries James Trefil New York Times Book Review Beyond its self portrait Alvarez provides an exceptionally clear view of the world of science Alan Lightman Washington Post Book World This is a richly absorbing autobiography Personally as well as scientifically forthright and plainspoken Alvarez holds the reader with the story of his life as a scientist much of the time at Berkeley Calif working with such men as Robert

Oppenheimer Ernest Lawrence and Enrico Fermi Publishers Weekly A gripping book It succeeds well in making the scientific experience and the excitement of discovery accessible to the general reader Richard L Garwin Physics Today A fascinating life Elena Brunet Los Angeles Times One of the best popular books on science to emerge from the laboratory in years Henry Kisor Chicago Sun Times Luis W Alvarez has an unsurpassed reputation among scientists for a lifelong record of crucial participation in important discoveries in pure and applied science In this book he performs an additional service by revealing his thought processes Philip Abelson Science Advisor American Association for the Advancement of Science Manhattan Jeffrey Strickland, 2011-05-16 The Men of Manhattan is a short history of the origins and development of the American atomic bomb program during World War II focusing on the men and woman who made it possible Beginning with the scientific developments of the pre war years the book details the role of scientific exploration in conducting a secret nationwide enterprise that took science from the laboratory and into combat with an entirely new type of weapon Throughout the book short biographies of the men and a women Lise Meitner Leona Woods Marshall Libby and Chien Shiung Wu are provided where most pertinent Although nuclear weapons still pose a threat to peace throughout the world splitting the atom was a watermark point in nuclear science and quantum physics Harnessed responsibly the enormous power of an atomic chain reaction can serve humanity for good e g atomic energy Nuclear medicine and x ray technology are examples of the benefits brought about by these pioneers the Men of Manhattan On Nuclear Terrorism Michael Levi, 2009-06-30 Nuclear terrorism is such a disturbing prospect that we shy away from its details Yet as a consequence we fail to understand how best to defeat it Michael Levi takes us inside nuclear terrorism and behind the decisions a terrorist leader would be faced with in pursuing a nuclear plot Along the way Levi identifies the many obstacles large and small that such a terrorist scheme might encounter allowing him to discover a host of ways that any plan might be foiled Surveying the broad universe of plots and defenses this accessible account shows how a wide ranging defense that integrates the tools of weapon and materials security law enforcement intelligence border controls diplomacy and the military can multiply intensify and compound the possibility that nuclear terrorists will fail Levi draws from our long experience with terrorism and cautions us not to focus solely on the most harrowing yet most improbable threats Nuclear terrorism shares much in common with other terrorist threats and as a result he argues defeating it is impossible unless we put our entire counterterrorism and homeland security house in order As long as we live in a nuclear age no defense can completely eliminate nuclear terrorism But this book reminds us that the right strategy can minimize the risks and shows us how to do it Fallout Jim Ottaviani, 2001 Written by Jim Ottaviani with art by various artists The Atomic Bomb and American Society Rosemary B. Mariner, G. Kurt Piehler, 2009 Drawing on the latest research on the atomic bomb and its history the contributors to this provocative collection of eighteen essays set out to answer two key questions First how did the atomic bomb a product of unprecedented technological innovation rapid industrial scale manufacturing and unparalleled military deployment shape U S foreign policy

the communities of workers who produced it and society as a whole And second how has American society s perception that the the bomb is a means of military deterrence in the Cold War era evolve under the influence of mass media scientists public intellectuals and even the entertainment industry In answering these questions The Atomic Bomb and American Society sheds light on the collaboration of science and the military in creating the bomb the role of women working at Los Alamos the transformation of nuclear physicists into public intellectuals as the reality of the bomb came into widespread consciousness the revolutionary change in military strategy following the invention of the bomb and the development of Cold War ideology the image of the bomb that was conveyed in the popular media and the connection of the bomb to the commemoration of World War II As it illuminates the cultural social political environmental and historical effects of the creation of the atomic bomb this volume contributes to our understanding of how democratic institutions can coexist with a technology that affects everyone even if only a few are empowered to manage it Rosemary B Mariner is formerly Joint Chiefs of Staff Chair and Professor of Military Studies for the National War College She is currently a lecturer in history at the University of Tennessee Knoxville G Kurt Piehler is associate professor of history and former director of the Center for the Study of War and Society at the University of Tennessee Knoxville which hosted the conference that formed the basis of this volume He is the author of Remembering War the American Way and World War II in the American Soldiers Lives Series as well as the coeditor with John Whiteclay Chambers II of Major Problems in American Military History **Binding Energy** John McPhee, 2011-04-01 Theodore Taylor was one of the most brilliant engineers of the nuclear age but in his later years he became concerned with the possibility of an individual being able to construct a weapon of mass destruction on their own McPhee tours American nuclear institutions with Taylor and shows us how close we are to terrorist attacks employing homemade nuclear weaponry Critical Assembly John Canaday, 2017-09-15 With technical mastery and remarkable empathy Canaday introduces readers to the people involved in the creation and testing of the first atomic bomb from initial theoretical conversations to the secretive work at Los Alamos Critical Assembly also includes brief biographies notes and a bibliography for further exploration about this critical event in world history **American Prometheus** Kai Bird, Martin J. Sherwin, 2007-12-18 THE INSPIRATION FOR THE ACADEMY AWARD WINNING MAJOR MOTION PICTURE OPPENHEIMER A riveting account of one of history s most essential and paradoxical figures Christopher Nolan 1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER PULITZER PRIZE WINNER The definitive biography of I Robert Oppenheimer one of the iconic figures of the twentieth century a brilliant physicist who led the effort to build the atomic bomb for his country in a time of war and who later found himself confronting the moral consequences of scientific progress A Kirkus Reviews Best Nonfiction Book of the Century In this magisterial acclaimed biography twenty five years in the making Kai Bird and Martin Sherwin capture Oppenheimer's life and times from his early career to his central role in the Cold War This is biography and history at its finest riveting and deeply informative A masterful account of Oppenheimer's rise and fall set in the context of the

turbulent decades of America's own transformation It is a tour de force Los Angeles Times Book Review A work of voluminous scholarship and lucid insight unifying its multifaceted portrait with a keen grasp of Oppenheimer's essential nature It succeeds in deeply fathoming his most damaging self contradictory behavior The New York Times Pedagogy and the Practice of Science David Kaiser, 2005 Studies examining the ways in which the training of engineers and scientists shapes their research strategies and scientific identities

The Top Books of the Year Los Alamos Primer The year 2023 has witnessed a remarkable surge in literary brilliance, with numerous captivating novels captivating the hearts of readers worldwide. Lets delve into the realm of bestselling books, exploring the engaging narratives that have charmed audiences this year. Los Alamos Primer: Colleen Hoovers "It Ends with Us" This heartfelt tale of love, loss, and resilience has captivated readers with its raw and emotional exploration of domestic abuse. Hoover skillfully weaves a story of hope and healing, reminding us that even in the darkest of times, the human spirit can prevail. Los Alamos Primer: Taylor Jenkins Reids "The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo" This captivating historical fiction novel unravels the life of Evelyn Hugo, a Hollywood icon who defies expectations and societal norms to pursue her dreams. Reids absorbing storytelling and compelling characters transport readers to a bygone era, immersing them in a world of glamour, ambition, and self-discovery. Los Alamos Primer: Delia Owens "Where the Crawdads Sing" This captivating coming-of-age story follows Kya Clark, a young woman who grows up alone in the marshes of North Carolina. Owens crafts a tale of resilience, survival, and the transformative power of nature, captivating readers with its evocative prose and mesmerizing setting. These bestselling novels represent just a fraction of the literary treasures that have emerged in 2023. Whether you seek tales of romance, adventure, or personal growth, the world of literature offers an abundance of captivating stories waiting to be discovered. The novel begins with Richard Papen, a bright but troubled young man, arriving at Hampden College. Richard is immediately drawn to the group of students who call themselves the Classics Club. The club is led by Henry Winter, a brilliant and charismatic young man. Henry is obsessed with Greek mythology and philosophy, and he quickly draws Richard into his world. The other members of the Classics Club are equally as fascinating. Bunny Corcoran is a wealthy and spoiled young man who is always looking for a good time. Charles Tavis is a quiet and reserved young man who is deeply in love with Henry. Camilla Macaulay is a beautiful and intelligent young woman who is drawn to the power and danger of the Classics Club. The students are all deeply in love with Morrow, and they are willing to do anything to please him. Morrow is a complex and mysterious figure, and he seems to be manipulating the students for his own purposes. As the students become more involved with Morrow, they begin to commit increasingly dangerous acts. The Secret History is a brilliant and thrilling novel that will keep you speculating until the very end. The novel is a cautionary tale about the dangers of obsession and the power of evil.

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