

Chapter 1 : Hugh Gusterson | geographical imaginations

Hugh Gusterson, MIT The Second Nuclear Age The first nuclear age was structured around a rivalry between two superpowers seeking larger and more advanced arsenals than one another.

In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content: Norris Hugh Gusterson, *People of the Bomb*: University of Minnesota Press, *People of the Bomb* is a collection of previously published journal articles and book chapters that date back to The eleven chapters plus a postscript cover a wide range of topics but are loosely held together by a few unifying themes. The main subject of the book is U. A further purpose of this "manufactured consensus" is to keep the population pliant and unquestioning. Nuclear weapons and the language that surrounds them are essential parts of this process. Hugh Gusterson, an anthropologist and ethnographer by training, brought a fresh perspective to the field in his first book, *Nuclear Rites*: University of California Press, , an account of living among the nuclear weapon scientists at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California. In his new book, Gusterson draws on other scholarly disciplines and a few academically fashionable Parisian gurus, with a sprinkling of Marxist and feminist theory thrown in. The title of the book is slightly misleading, abetted by the unusual cover photograph. The themes from *Nuclear Rites* are rehashed in several of the chapters here. Gusterson recounts his meeting with Sylvia, a Japanese-American weapon designer, whose aunt was at Hiroshima. She, like many of the scientists he encounters, does not fit his preconceived stereotype. Through her he learns how weapon scientists are formed. To be able to work on nuclear weapons requires resocialization and a new way of thinking. The central ideological axiom that must be instilled is that the weapons [End Page] are necessary for deterrence and, if the United States remains strong, will never be used. In this subculture, nuclear tests become a rite of passage demonstrating expertise and control over weapons of such unimaginable power that they could, if used on a large scale, end most life on earth. The quality of the chapters is a bit uneven. Some of the essays were written a decade or so ago, and the issues and topics discussed often seem dated. On the weaker side is one that recounts how Gusterson and a weapon designer watched a film on television about cyborgs. The essay includes such obtuse sentences as: Unfortunately, the book contains far too much of this kind of mumbo-jumbo. Some of the stronger chapters examine the role of language in the rise of the United States to its status as the preeminent power in the post world. Gusterson aligns himself with a "critical security studies" perspective rather than the traditional realist perspective, which he says dominates international relations theory. The former school of thought examines how the national interest is socially constructed through the use of a dominant discourse. Gusterson critiques some of the experts on nuclear strategy and the Soviet Union who failed to predict the end of the You are not currently authenticated. View freely available titles:

Chapter 2 : Hugh Gusterson | Revolv

Consent in the Nuclear Age By Hugh Gusterson Professor, Anthropology and International Affairs George Washington University guster@www.nxgvision.com The views expressed in this paper are the author's alone.

A critical reading of Hugh Gusterson Last year, the anthropologist Hugh Gusterson, known for his book on nuclear rituals at the U. Toward a critical ethnography of the university. I wanted to write up some thoughts about its argument, which I think deserves to be considered carefully. The first premise of this paper is simple, albeit negative: Anthropologists have not systematically studied universities. But as an attempt to give a definitive judgment about a research area that Gusterson does not actually work in, questions emerge. What are its criteria of evaluation, what are its politics of research, and from what social position is this evaluation rendered? It is not that I have any general objection to nonspecialists writing critically about specialized fields. But critical engagement can be a two-way street, can it not? As Academography has tried to make clear, there is actually a great deal of new, excellent critical ethnography of higher education. My thoughts have in fact gotten too long to fit in a single blog post, so I will break it into a series of successive posts here. Let me begin this one with a quick summary of his paper which again you can read in its entirety at Wiley. Sex, Brotherhood and Privilege on Campus. This first section is quite critical of this literature, I think even dismissive for reasons we will come back to. The second part of the paper consists of a summary of interdisciplinary social research about Cold War universities in the United States. Finally, a long third section of the paper rehearses a number of well-known empirical findings about contemporary U. It also advocates a critical ethnography of the discipline of economics, which Gusterson holds responsible for failing to predict the economic crash. The paper ends with positive shout-outs to a couple of existing campus research projects: I would be delighted to see further studies of the things he emphasizes debt, administrative work, class domination, etc , and if he were to actually conduct these studies himself, that would be most welcome. In short, my reactions about Gusterson are really not about what he affirms or about what energizes him. They are, rather, reactions to the overall framing of his paper; they have to do with what he has to deny and reject to hold together his polemical argument. And I want to take some time to describe these in subsequent posts because I am all too aware that it actually does matter how we frame our work, and who speaks on behalf of others.

Chapter 3 : Books by Hugh Gusterson (Author of Nuclear Rites)

Toward An Anthropology of the Second Nuclear Age Hugh Gusterson Friday, February 1, a.m. Hortense Amsterdam House The decision to end nuclear testing marked the transition from the first nuclear age to the.

But it has a more complicated history. This publication appeared in French translation under the direction of Raymond Aron in volume 5, no. Benjamin subsequently rewrote the essay and after editorial work by Theodore and Margarethe Adorno it was posthumously published in its commonly recognized form in his *Schriften* of . Compared to that of the machine age, of course, this [pre-historic] technology was undeveloped. But from a dialectical stand-point, the disparity is unimportant. What matters is the way the orientation and aims of that technology differ from those of ours. Whereas the former made the maximum possible use of human beings, the latter reduces their use to the minimum. The achievements of the first technology might be said to culminate in human sacrifice; those of the second, in the remote-controlled aircraft which needs no human crew. The results of the first technology are valid once and for all it deals with irreparable lapse or sacrificial death, which holds good for eternity. The results of the second are wholly provisional it operates by means of experiments and endlessly varied test procedures. The origin of the second technology lies at the point where, by an unconscious ruse, human beings first began to distance themselves from nature. It lies, in other words, in play. His purpose is to juxtapose one technology or at least its limit-case, sacrifice, which engages the human in the most direct and intimate way possible, once and for all, to another, from which so he says the human is disengaged in a mechanical act that is, in principle, endlessly repeatable. Project Aphrodite did experiment with the use of television to guide war-weary Flying Fortresses filled with explosives and napalm on to targets in Germany, but the attempts were largely unsuccessful and singularly irrelevant to the strategic bombing campaigns of World War II. Nevertheless, Chamayou argues that to some degree Zworykin had identified the core principle that would later be used to develop the smart bomb and the drone. His sharper point is that the forerunner of the drone was an anti-kamikaze; sharper because this conceptual origin places the drone within a distinctive ethico-technical economy of life and death. The drone attacks are widely perceived in the Middle East as cowardly, because the drone pilot is killing people on the ground from the safety of an air-conditioned pod in Nevada, where there is no chance that he can be killed by those he is attacking. He has turned combat into hunting. The honorable drama of combat lies in the symmetrical willingness of warriors to wager their bodies against each other for a cause. In itself, this destabilizes the conventional understanding of war as an activity in which human dying and killing are exchanged. I once interviewed a former special-forces officer who was trained to hike behind enemy lines with a tactical nuclear weapon on his back and place it near an important target. Although the weapon had a timer, he expected to die at ground zero. Seen in this light, Americans trained for the biggest suicide bombing mission of all. To some historians the first candidate is Andrew Kehoe, who set off an explosion at a schoolhouse in Bath, Michigan in May , killing 44 people, before setting off dynamite in his truck and killing himself and several other people. Whether you count this as a suicide bombing in the modern sense of the term depends on the criteria you think appropriate. Shirwa Ahmed , who drove a car bomb into a government compound in Puntland in October , killing as many as 30 people; Farah Mohamed Beledi , who killed himself and three soldiers at a military checkpoint in Mogadishu in June ; and Abdisalan Hussein Ali, who attacked African Union troops in Mogadishu six months later. All three were Somali-Americans who had lived in Minnesota and were recruited by al-Shabaab.

Chapter 4 : Hugh Gusterson - Wikipedia

Hugh Gusterson is an anthropologist at George Washington University, back from leave at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. His work focuses on nuclear culture, international security and the anthropology of science.

In the field of Science and Technology Studies one often encounters arguments that nuclear technologies, whether for nuclear weapons or nuclear energy, are inherently incompatible with democracy. He puts nuclear weapons and nuclear energy technologies in this category of technological systems that can only make society less democratic. Winner is particularly concerned about civil liberties. He argues that, in nuclear societies, governments will be so worried that terrorists could steal uranium, plutonium and other nuclear materials that they will have to increase the powers of the police while progressively diminishing civil liberties. Meanwhile government surveillance programs may particularly target political critics of nuclear technology, whose movements and ideas will be monitored by the security apparatus of the state. Two Narratives of Consent Rather than rehearse or contest these well established arguments about authoritarianism, in this paper I want to probe the relationship between nuclear technologies and democracy from a different angle: Consent is a foundational precept of liberal democracies. It is performed and built into the structure of society at every level, from national elections to local governance and even professional associations. In the contemporary United States, for example, federal, state and local governments hold regular elections to secure the consent of those they govern. It was not always so. If we look at European societies five hundred years ago, political life was structured around the prerogatives of the sovereign rather than the consent of the people. The king or, occasionally, queen was presumed to rule by divine right, and their powers extended to the summary execution of those of their subjects who displeased them, the declaration of war on their own sole initiative, and the demand for financial tribute. In a story that has been well told by generations of liberal historians, over several centuries sovereign power was dismantled by revolution in some countries notably the United States in and France in and by progressive reform in others for example, Britain in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. By the middle of the twentieth century most European countries, and many outside Europe as well, had established broadly democratic forms of governance that followed the principle enshrined in the second paragraph of the American Declaration of Independence of The underlying principle of this form of governance was that people had a right to choose those who governed them through free elections and that the people were to consent to the levying of taxes and to the allocation of tax revenues. These laws mandated the public release of government documents except where they contained classified information and, in the case of the Sunshine Laws, required some categories of officials to conduct certain kinds of deliberation in public. The global force of these democratic principles of government by consent of the governed increased still further in the early s when the cold war ended and former Eastern bloc nations moved away from one-party communist rule and, albeit more convincingly in some cases than others, adopted democratic elections. What I have just laid out is one way of telling the history of advanced industrial modernity as the growth of democratic governance and of the increasing importance of the concept of consent. I call this the narrative of industrial citizenship. It is particularly associated with the work of the German sociologist Ulrich Beck, author of the book Risk Society. He had in mind principally chemical and radioactive contamination, but his model works equally well for genetically modified organisms and greenhouse gases. According to Beck, these new forms of risk have three salient features: In the afflictions they produce they are no longer tied to their place of origin the industrial plant. By their nature they endanger all forms of life on this planet. The normative bases of their calculation the concept of accident and insurance, medical precautions, and so on do not fit the basic dimensions of these modern threats. Atomic plants, for example, are not privately insured or insurable. The affected include those not yet alive at the time or in the place where the accident occurred but born years later and long distances away. The dangers of highly developed nuclear and chemical productive forces abolish the foundations and categories according to which we have thought and acted to this point, such as space and time, work and leisure time, factory and nation-state, indeed even the borders between continents. Radiation spread beyond the locale in

which it was produced, carried by winds across countries and continents, contaminating crops and animals that had to be destroyed as far away from Chernobyl as Northern England, for example, lodging in the thyroid glands of people, especially young children, and rendering certain areas uninhabitable for generations. Beck emphasizes another characteristic of risk in the advanced industrial modern world that distinguishes it from earlier forms of risk and has a direct bearing on discussions of consent: They can thus be changed, magnified, dramatized, or minimized within knowledge, and to that extent they are particularly open to social definition and construction. These kinds of claims and counter-claims have been a salient feature of public discourse in the wake of the nuclear accidents at Chernobyl and Fukushima. Joseph Masco, an anthropologist who writes about nuclear culture, has observed that all Americans carry Strontium in their bodies as a result of American nuclear weapons testing. And yet the American government has, without asking for consent in any meaningful way, placed Strontium in the bodies of all Americans. It is also now accepted that its nuclear weapons testing program caused an epidemic of cancer and leukemia in Utah, downwind of the Nevada Nuclear Test Site, and elevated rates of thyroid cancer around the Hanford plutonium production facility, and in a swathe across the United States and Canada where prevailing winds carried fallout from nuclear tests in a northeasterly pattern. National Cancer Institute¹⁸ The members of the public who were exposed to this radiation were not informed of the risks. Indeed, their government assured them there were no risks. And some of the victims had not yet even been born. In other words, there was no meaningful consent on their part to the risk of exposure. The same could be said for those exposed to radiation from the accidents at Chernobyl and Fukushima. If citizens have been able to insist on the power of expanded consent in the realm of political citizenship, the same has not been true in regards to industrial citizenship. Here they are dependent on the assurances of experts who may or may not be trustworthy, and they are potentially vulnerable to accidents in places they have never visited, places that may be located in other countries where they have no access to processes of formal political consent. And unless, like some Japanese citizens after Fukushima, they buy their own radiation detectors, they may never even know that they have been exposed. They are in some fundamental respects like medieval subjects of the sovereign. The question, then, is how to build and reconstruct practices and institutions in the sphere of industrial citizenship in a way that recapitulates our progress in the sphere of political citizenship in developing democratic procedures grounded in consent. Until we do so, advanced industrial societies will be incompletely democratic. Obviously it is not a question of dismantling them. They have given ample proof of their effectiveness. But their limitations are no less obvious. They must be enriched, expanded, extended, and improved so as to bring about what some call technical democracy, or more precisely in order to make our democracies more able to absorb the debates and controversies aroused by science and technology. Although the two technologies are obviously intimately related “why else would the IAEA devote such resources to inspecting nuclear power plants in search of evidence of weapons programs? Put baldly, while it is possible to imagine democratic processes of consent and control in regard to nuclear energy, nuclear weapons are fundamentally incompatible with democracy. This our Convention understood to be the most oppressive of all Kingly oppressions; and they resolved to so frame the Constitution that no one man should hold the power of bringing this oppression upon us. Nuclear weapons are, of course, the most destructive weapons ever devised. A study of U. Given that the U. By the end of the cold war, the commander of a U. Trident submarine had the ability to destroy dozens of cities without approval from the President. Thus, in a series of decisions driven by technostrategic realities, the ability and authority to use the most destructive weapons in history has, in a way that would presumably horrify Alexander Hamilton, been vested in a single person and democratic control over their use has been largely forfeited by Congress. Similar stories could be told for Russia, France and the United Kingdom. We can debate whether it is realistically practical to put the nuclear genie back in the bottle, but we cannot pretend that this technology is subject to democratic processes of consent. Nuclear Energy The possibilities for constructing regimes of consent around nuclear energy are more expansive. I conclude this paper with a discussion of five areas in which we might think of enhancing public consent to nuclear energy and, thereby, democratizing industrial citizenship. In framing these comments, I take two commitments as axiomatic: And, second, it is in the nature of consent that the public has a right to adopt positions with which experts disagree. A medical patient who wants

acupuncture although their doctor thinks they would be better off taking the latest pharmaceutical product should, within reason, get acupuncture. So my first recommendation concerns national opinion. This is what it means to take consent seriously. Four countries that have decided to phase out nuclear energy over the long term are Belgium²⁵, Switzerland²⁶, Italy²⁷ and Germany. While it would be an exaggeration to say that there is a clearly demonstrated preponderance of opinion in Germany, Switzerland and Belgium in absolute opposition to nuclear power, these countries are so divided over the issue, especially after Fukushima, and the opposition in Germany in particular has for many years been able to mobilize large protests, that it would surely be mistaken to characterize these societies as having given a mandate to nuclear power. The situation is more clear-cut in the state of Nevada in the U. Opinion polls suggest that roughly three quarters of Nevadans oppose the planned nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain. This alone should be reason enough to cancel the repository, despite the large amounts of money that have been ill-advisedly sunk into its construction by a Congress determined to force the facility on a state whose residents have persistently withheld their consent for it. A good example would be the WIPP nuclear waste repository in New Mexico, which enjoys the legitimacy of local consent, even after an accident that vented radiation into the environment. Ulrich Beck points out that one of the disturbing features of nuclear and other contemporary industrial technologies is that damage generated by major accidents often cannot be confined within national boundaries. Thus, for example, reindeer owners in Norway and sheep farmers in Britain suffered considerable economic losses because of a nuclear accident at Chernobyl, faraway in Ukraine. While it is hard to imagine a global regime in which Norwegian villagers and British farmers have veto power over a nuclear power plant several countries away, other measures are possible to ameliorate this situation of forced consent. At present there is no universal global regime to harmonize and enforce transnational compensation payments in the event of nuclear accidents. There should be, with governments negotiating a framework for consistent compensation and the insurance industry developing instruments to facilitate such compensation. Nor are there globally uniform minimum standards for reactor design. Thus, for example, it is up to individual countries to decide whether they want containment domes for their reactors. Given that an uncontained nuclear meltdown will almost certainly send radiation to neighboring countries, it is reasonable for international society to insist that all reactors in the world conform to minimum safety standards, such as the construction of containment domes. The Convention on Nuclear Safety, created after Chernobyl, is a step in the right direction, but it lacks strong enforcement mechanisms. One might anticipate in the future a Global Agreement on Reactor Design Safety GARDS backed up by a transnational cadre of nuclear safety inspectors who would monitor not just design but operational safety. My third recommendation is to enhance transparency. There is a clear and strong relationship between transparency and consent. Take the example of a legal contract. While a person may have signed it, if it is written in opaque language designed to be impenetrable and the signatory does not really understand what he is signing, the consent behind the signature will be weak. Consent is more meaningful when the person giving it understands what they are consenting to, and transparency helps foster the trust that consent should animate. Thus, if the quality of consent in the nuclear age is to be improved, those who own nuclear facilities and the regulators that oversee them must make a point of meeting with the public to answer questions and discuss concerns. In some cases in the U. These kinds of maneuvers, all too transparent as attempts to control public participation, only breed ill-will. Facility operators and regulators should also release as much information as possible into the public sphere, including potentially embarrassing information about safety lapses. This information should be conveyed to the public with as little jargon and as few acronyms as possible. Fourth, public trust will be enhanced and the likelihood of consent increased if members of the public are confident that nuclear regulators are free of conflicts of interest and, like respected judges in legal cases, are truly independent. On the other hand, if they believe that nuclear regulators have been captured by those they are to regulate, they are more likely to withhold consent and trust. We saw this in Japan where revelations³⁴ about the coziness between regulators and the industry they regulated after Fukushima led to a precipitous fall in public confidence in nuclear regulators and in the safety of nuclear power plants. Different countries structure their regulatory agencies in different ways. For example, resident inspectors in nuclear power plants are not allowed to even have lunch with those they are overseeing to ensure that they do not

develop loyalties and friendships that cut across their regulatory obligations. This rule, while it imposes a burden of solitude on resident inspectors, seems to work well to maintain the independent judgment of the inspectors.

Chapter 5 : Consent in the Nuclear Age | Hugh Gusterson - www.nxgvision.com

November 1 - The Second Nuclear Age, Hugh Gusterson, assistant professor of anthropology, MIT, and author of Nuclear Rites: A Weapons Laboratory at the End of the Cold War and People of the Bomb: Portraits of America's Nuclear Complex. www.nxgvision.com is currently working on his new book, Labs in Crisis: Nuclear Weapons Scientists After the Cold War.

Chapter 6 : Project MUSE - People of the Bomb: Portraits of America's Nuclear Complex (review)

People of the Bomb: Portraits of America's Nuclear Complex by Hugh Gusterson We have had the bomb on our minds since it was first our weaponry and then our diplomacy, and now it's our economy.

Chapter 7 : People of the Bomb " University of Minnesota Press

programs in Iran and North Korea-made many realize that, if the danger of the first nuclear age was an incineration of the planet by two reckless superpowers, then the second nuclear age opens a new horizon of danger: proliferation and the ignition of new regional nuclear arms races.