

Ground Zero 1945

Pictures by Atomic Bomb Survivors

John W. Dower

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General Sources on the Effects of the Bombs

"Atomic bomb" and "Atomic bomb-related disease," in *Japan: An Illustrated Encyclopedia*, (Kodansha, 1993), vol. 1: 74-79. Concise overviews of the effects of the bombs in a standard reference source.

John Hersey. *Hiroshima* (1946). The most famous English-language account of atomic-bomb survivors, originally published in *New Yorker* magazine and frequently reprinted as a short book.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki: The Physical, Medical, and Social Effects of the Atomic Bombings (Basic Books, 1981). This voluminous collection, originally published in Japanese in 1979, was compiled by the Japanese "Committee for the Compilation of Materials on Damage Caused by the Atomic Bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki"; the English translation is by Eisei Ishikawa and David L. Swain. Although unwieldy, this book not only brings together the best information about the effects of the bombs available by the 1970s, but also conveys the complexity of the subject by including conflicting data and indicating where this comes from (on such subjects as overall fatalities, the number of Koreans killed by the two bombs, bomb-related diseases, etc.).

Robert J. Lifton. *Death in Life: Survivors of Hiroshima* (Random House, 1967). A pioneer study of the psychological legacies of the bombs on survivors.

Richard Minear, transl. and ed., *Hiroshima: Three Witnesses* (Princeton University Press, 1990). Writings by Hara Tamiki, Ōta Yōko, and Tōge Sankichi.

Kyoko Selden and Mark Selden, eds. *The Atomic Bomb: Voices from Hiroshima and Nagasaki* (M. E. Sharpe, 1989).

John W. Dower. "The Bombed: Hiroshimas and Nagasakis in Japanese Memory," *Diplomatic History* 19.2 (Spring 1995), 275-95; reprinted in Michael J. Hogen, ed., *Hiroshima in History and Memory* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 116-42.

_____. "Three Narratives of Our Humanity," in Edward T. Linenthal and Tom Engelhardt, eds., *History Wars: The 'Enola Gay' and Other Battles for the American Past* (Metropolitan Books, 1996), 63-96. A shorter, earlier version of this appears as "Triumphal and Tragic Narratives about the War in Asia," *Journal of American History* 82.3 (December 1995), 1124-35.

Published Visual Materials

Unforgettable Fire: Pictures Drawn by Atomic Bomb Survivors. Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK), ed. (Pantheon, 1977). Originally published in Japanese, this collection reproduces over 100 pictures by survivors with English captions.

Nagasaki Journey: The Photographs of Yosuke Yamahata, August 10, 1945. Robert Jenkins, ed. (Pomegranate Artbooks, 1995). These photographs were withheld from publication in Japan until the end of the postwar U.S. occupation in 1952.

Hiroshima-Nagasaki: Document 1961 . A well-known collection of postwar photographs

published by the Japan Council Against Atomic & Hydrogen Bombs, with English text. Features photographs by Dōmon Ken and Tōmatsu Shōmei.

Hiroshima-Nagasaki: A Pictorial Record of the Atomic Destruction (Hiroshima-Nagasaki Publishing Co., 1978). Published by an ad hoc citizen's group, this contains both photographs and survivors' artwork.

The Hiroshima Murals: The Art of Iri Maruki and Toshi Maruki . John W. Dower & John Junkerman, eds. (Kodansha International, 1985). Reproduces the collaborative paintings of a couple whose well-known political artwork began with many murals on the atomic bombs and eventually extended to subjects such as the Rape of Nanking, Auschwitz, and the mercury-poisoning victims of Minamata. [The Marukis' work is also the subject of a documentary film titled *Hellfire: A Journey from Hiroshima* , available through First Run Features.]

Barefoot Gen: A Cartoon History of Hiroshima , 3 volumes (1979; republished in 1987 by New Society Publishers). This is an English version of the famous, ultra-realistic manga serial *Hadashi no Gen* by Nakazawa Keiji. Drawing on his own experience, Nakazawa depicts the grim life of a feisty orphaned survivor of Hiroshima.

WWII Web Sites

The following sites have been chosen from the numerous resources that exist online for (1) their overview of World War II, and (2) their particular focus on the US-Japan conflict in the Pacific theatre and the decision to use the atomic bomb. For a detailed listing of some 240 sites, see J. Douglas Smith & Richard Jensen, eds., *World War II on the WEB: A Guide to the Very Best Sites* (Scholarly Resources, 2003).

1. This link offers a concise overview of the war in the Pacific from the Japanese hopes of a limited engagement to the events leading up to the US decision to drop atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

<http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/AMH/AMH/AMH-23.html>

2. This collection of 50 images from the National Archives depicts key events in the Pacific theatre. Many of these are familiar images, but the site does a nice job of sequencing them and giving a brief description of each.

<http://historyplace.com/unitedstates/pacificwar/index.html>

3. Another collection of images from the National Archives, these are mainly photos of Pearl Harbor. The site also includes war propaganda posters encouraging revenge by the US on Japan.

<http://www.ibiblio.org/memory/>

4. This is the website of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, the organization that has generously provided Visualizing Cultures with pictures by survivors of the atomic bombs. The site offers a wealth of information from survivor's accounts to the history of nuclear weapons to nuclear activism in the wake of such a devastating event. This site is dense with information and can be challenging to navigate.

<http://www.pcf.city.hiroshima.jp/peacesite/indexE.html>

5. The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum has also recently made well over a thousand drawings and paintings by survivors available on a website that requires facility in Japanese. <http://www.pcf.city.hiroshima.jp/database>

6. A Fordham University graduate student's thesis project, this ambitious site on World War II in general breaks down the war by year and further by European or Pacific theatres. It includes many interesting photographs.

<http://www.worldwar2database.com/html/frame1.htm>

7. This site offers a useful nexus providing links to other sites related to Hiroshima-Nagasaki and atomic history more generally.

<http://www2.gol.com/users/friedman/alinks.html>

8. This site links to basic official US documents pertaining to the decision to use the atomic bombs against Japan.

<http://www.dannen.com/decision/>

9. This is another site that provides access to primary materials related to Truman's decision to drop the atomic bombs. Beginning in July 1945, documents include White House minutes, commission reports, letters to and from military leaders on the weapons' use and targeting, official press releases, and entries from Truman's diary.

http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/bomb/large/index.php

10. This fairly comprehensive site of WWII documents is part of a broader initiative at the Yale Law School to collect and publish documents of historical significance on law, war, and diplomacy.

<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/wwii/wwii.htm>

11. This fascinating collection of US poster art from WWII is compiled by the National Archives.

http://www.archives.gov/exhibit_hall/powers_of_persuasion/powers_of_persuasion_home.html

On viewing images of a potentially disturbing nature: click here.

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