



# Shockwave: Countdown to Hiroshima

By Stephen Walker



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**Shockwave: Countdown to Hiroshima** By Stephen Walker



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A riveting, minute-by-minute account of the momentous event that changed our world forever

On a quiet Monday morning in August 1945, a five-ton bomb—dubbed *Little Boy* by its creators—was dropped from an American plane onto the Japanese city of Hiroshima. On that day, a firestorm of previously unimagined power was unleashed on a vibrant metropolis of 300,000 people, leaving one third of its population dead, its buildings and landmarks incinerated. It was the terrifying dawn of the Atomic Age, spawning decades of paranoia, mistrust, and a widespread and very real fear of the potential annihilation of the human race.

Author Stephen Walker brilliantly re-creates the three terrible weeks leading up to the wartime detonation of the atomic bomb—from the first successful test in the New Mexico desert to the cataclysm and its aftermath—presenting the story through the eyes of pilots, scientists, civilian victims, and world leaders who stood at the center of earth-shattering drama. It is a startling, moving, frightening, and remarkable portrait of an extraordinary event—a shockwave whose repercussions can be felt to this very day.



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## Shockwave: Countdown to Hiroshima By Stephen Walker Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. The pace of Walker's narrative replicates the frantic advance of August 1945. BBC filmmaker Walker won an Emmy for his documentary on the bombing of Hiroshima and brings precision jump-cuts to this synesthetic account of the 20th century's defining event. Beginning his story three weeks before August 6 (with the first test of a bomb some of its creators speculated might incinerate the earth's atmosphere), Walker takes readers on a roller-coaster ride through the memories of American servicemen, Japanese soldiers and civilians, and the polyglot team of scientists who participated in the Manhattan Project under Gen. Leslie Groves. He establishes the doubts, fears and hopes of the bomb's designers, most of whom participated from a fear that Nazi Germany would break the nuclear threshold first. He nicely retells the story of Japan's selection months before as a target, reflecting the accelerated progress of the war in Europe, and growing concern among U.S. policymakers at the prospect of unthinkable casualties, Japanese as well as American, should an invasion of Japan's "Home Islands" be necessary. Walker conveys above all the bewilderment of Hiroshima's people, victims of a Japanese government controlled by men determined to continue fighting at all costs. *Shockwave's* depiction of the consequences invite comparison with John Hershey's still-classic *Hiroshima*. (Aug.)

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From [Booklist](#)

\*Starred Review\* Every account of the destruction of Hiroshima is dramatic, but historian and filmmaker Walker has created an exceptionally taut and revealing chronicle. By beginning with the first atomic bomb test in New Mexico on July 16, 1945, and documenting with cinematic selectivity and flow the key events of the next three weeks leading up to August 6, 1945, the day *Little Boy* was detonated above Hiroshima, he captures the mix of fury and ambition that drove the decision to deploy this barely understood weapon against a civilian population. With an unerring sense of striking detail and ironic juxtaposition, Walker cuts from the tension at Los Alamos to Potsdam--where Truman, Churchill, and Stalin met to decide Japan's fate--to the top-secret airbase on the tiny Pacific island of Tinian, from which the *Enola Gay* took flight. Here are sharp and searching close-ups of the bomb makers and the bomb's victims, including Taeko Nakamae, then a girl soldier, and a doctor, Shuntaro Hida, who both survived the apocalypse and share their horrific memories 60 years later. Walker brings a fresh, judicious perspective to the eternally shocking story of Hiroshima, which must be told and retold so that its terrible lessons are never forgotten. *Donna Seaman*  
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Review

"Dramatic ... an important page-turner ... admirably evenhanded and smoothly written." (Entertainment Weekly (Grade: A-))

"A meticulous, emotionally devastating portrait of both sides ... [Walker] creates an arresting feeling of suspense." (Atlanta Journal-Constitution)

"Like John Hersey's HIROSHIMA, SHOCKWAVE brings to life one of history's most profound events. Don't miss it." (Arizona Republic)

"Electrifying . . . The tension and concentration of Walker's thriller-like prose elicits a visceral response." (Chicago Tribune)

“Gripping...takes us back to 1945, allowing readers to appreciate the spectacular scientific effort that created this tool of doom.” (Raleigh News & Observer)

“Shockwave is a stunning book, among the most immediate and thrilling works of history I have ever read.” (Irish Times)

“Uniquely readable, immediate, and human . . . an exceptionally taut and revealing chronicle.” (Booklist (starred review))

“Walker takes readers on a roller-coaster ride ... invite[s] comparison with John Hersey’s still-classic Hiroshima.” (Publishers Weekly (starred review))

“Superb. . . . Walker writes with a sense of urgency and high drama . . . engrossing [and] saddening.” (Kirkus Reviews (starred review))

“Highly recommended ... [Walker] lends a rapid pace and cinematic air to the narrative.” (Library Journal)

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Daniele Chambers:**

Shockwave: Countdown to Hiroshima can be one of your starter books that are good idea. All of us recommend that straight away because this publication has good vocabulary that may increase your knowledge in language, easy to understand, bit entertaining but nevertheless delivering the information. The copy writer giving his/her effort to get every word into enjoyment arrangement in writing Shockwave: Countdown to Hiroshima yet doesn't forget the main level, giving the reader the hottest and based confirm resource information that maybe you can be among it. This great information can easily drawn you into completely new stage of crucial contemplating.

#### **Cynthia Gomez:**

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