

Five Days in August



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Most Americans believe that the Second World War ended because the two atomic bombs dropped on Japan forced it to surrender. *Five Days in August* boldly presents a different interpretation: that the military did not clearly understand the atomic bomb's revolutionary strategic potential, that the Allies were almost as stunned by the surrender as the Japanese were by the attack, and that not only had experts planned and fully anticipated the need for a third bomb, they were skeptical about whether the atomic bomb would work at all. With these ideas, Michael Gordin reorients the historical and contemporary conversation about the A-bomb and World War II.

Gordin posits that although the bomb clearly brought with it a new level of destructive power, strategically it was regarded by decision-makers simply as a new conventional weapon, a bigger firebomb. To lend greater understanding to the thinking behind its deployment, Gordin takes the reader to the island of Tinian, near Guam, the home base for the bombing campaign, and the location from which the anticipated third atomic bomb was to be delivered. He also details how Americans generated a new story about the origins of the bomb after surrender: that the United States knew in advance that the bomb would end the war and that its destructive power was so awesome no one could resist it.

Five Days in August explores these and countless other legacies of the atomic bomb in a glaring new light. Daring and iconoclastic, it will result in far-reaching discussions about the significance of the A-bomb, about World War II, and about the moral issues they have spawned.

作者介绍:

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