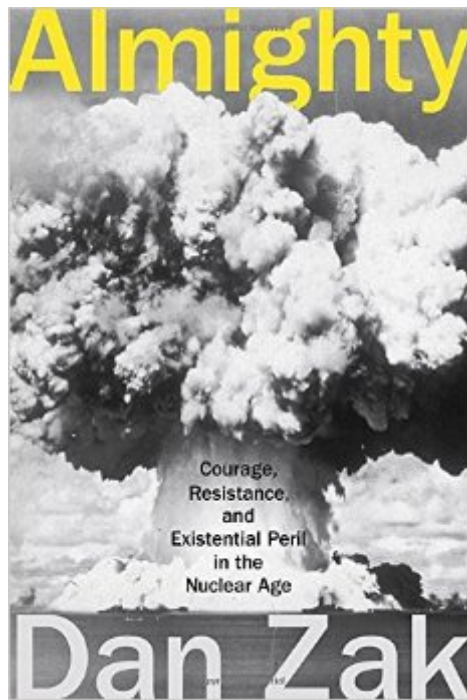


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# Almighty: Courage, Resistance, And Existential Peril In The Nuclear Age



## Synopsis

ON A TRANQUIL SUMMER NIGHT in July 2012, a trio of peace activists infiltrated the Y-12 National Security Complex in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Nicknamed the "Fort Knox of Uranium," Y-12 was supposedly one of the most secure sites in the world, a bastion of warhead parts and hundreds of tons of highly enriched uranium "enough to power thousands of nuclear bombs. The three activists—a house painter, a Vietnam War veteran, and an 82-year-old Catholic nun—penetrated the complex's exterior with alarming ease; their strongest tools were two pairs of bolt cutters and three hammers. Once inside, these pacifists hung protest banners, spray-painted biblical messages, and streaked the walls with human blood. Then they waited to be arrested. WITH THE BREAK-IN and their symbolic actions, the activists hoped to draw attention to a costly military-industrial complex that stockpiles deadly nukes. But they also triggered a political and legal firestorm of urgent and troubling questions. What if they had been terrorists? Why do the United States and Russia continue to possess enough nuclear weaponry to destroy the world several times over? IN ALMIGHTY, WASHINGTON POST REPORTER Dan Zak answers these questions by reexamining America's love-hate relationship to the bomb, from the race to achieve atomic power before the Nazis did to the solemn 70th anniversary of Hiroshima. At a time of concern about proliferation in such nations as Iran and North Korea, the U.S. arsenal is plagued by its own security problems. This life-or-death quandary is unraveled in Zak's eye-opening account, with a cast that includes the biophysicist who first educated the public on atomic energy, the prophet who predicted the creation of Oak Ridge, the generations of activists propelled into resistance by their faith, and the Washington bureaucrats and diplomats who are trying to keep the world safe. Part historical adventure, part courtroom drama, part moral thriller, Almighty reshapes the accepted narratives surrounding nuclear weapons and shows that our greatest modern-day threat remains a power we discovered long ago.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A must-read for anyone under 50 who thinks they know something about our nation's nuclear weapons systems. The book's first half takes you from the invention of the bomb up through today, while the second half internationalizes events, all the while weaving in the threads of the author's reporting on three activists who broke in to the Y-12 National Security Complex in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, to stage a peaceful protest of weapons capable of destroying the world. I'm really glad I read it, and know it will be a loaner book for years to come.

Part morality tale, scientific discussion and history lesson. Washington Post journalist Dan Zak writes an in depth character study of three anti-nuclear weapons activists, a house painter, a Vietnam War veteran and an 82-year old Catholic nun, as they march across "The Field" to the Oak Ridge, Tennessee, Y-12, nuclear enrichment complex. Mr. Zak skillfully explores their motives, backgrounds, actions and aftermath. The book is that rare non-fiction narrative that reads like a fine, fast-paced novel. Very highly recommended.

Dan Zak's "Almighty" is an excellent book! Meticulously researched, the author takes a difficult subject-nuclear weapons and the break-in of a nuclear facility-and turns it into a very insightful, readable and fascinating story. Every American should read this. Highly recommended!

I highly recommend this fascinating book. Dan Zak has written a praise worthy account of the 2012 break-in of the Y-12 nuclear facility in Oak Ridge, Tennessee as well as biographical information on the 82-year-old nun and her two accompanist and historical information about the famous Manhattan Project. He told this story in a very straight forward manner while remaining very unbiased throughout the narrative. I suggest anyone interested in history, current events, or reading a well- written book read this book.

The story tells of a 'break-in', the story weaves in the biographies of the 3 'stealthers'... the story

takes another zig-zag again, astutely, to include the Making and Use of the "Bomb" up to the present state of Mutual Deterrence !! The story is also about the possible "Fall" of Humanity, wherein Hubris and the potential for human error strike at survival of civilization as we know it, if not the survival of Homo Sapiens, entirely. How to characterize what Dan Zak has written:

“Almighty” is a “journalistically articulated recent history”. I take this remarkable work of non-fiction as a personal call to making a choice between complacency and conversation. The book “Almighty” concludes with the status of the non-proliferation of nukes and the emergence of several ‘movements’ to ban nuclear weapons altogether. “Almighty” evokes a question: Which direction will Humanity take ?

The seemingly inconsequential event described in the Prologue is deceiving because it has fully-intended consequences. Reading about nuclear fission and fusion can make your eyes glaze over and want a cookie but Dan Zak makes it very readable; he is an excellent writer tackling an ambitious topic of nuclear weaponry combined with an exposure of governmental wastefulness. Now who doesn't like a book about governmental wastefulness? But very carefully and more importantly, Dan Zak leads you into the ethical and moral complications of even owning materials of death. It is also a book about people who are inspired to become activists championing peace. I sent a list of follow-up questions to Dan Zak after reading his thought-provoking book and he responded with lengthy and thoughtful answers which only makes me love the book more.

When you have presidential nominee say "we have them (nukes) why can't we use them" it's a must read before you cast your vote in Nov, that's if you care for mankind!!..well written!!

An extremely great read of Sister Meagan, Greg's, and Michael's embarrassing the nuclear weapons complex. I highly recommend this book.

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