

Effects of the atomic bomb



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The effects of the atomic bomb were terrible. There's no doubt in my mind that the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were a costly mistake. Atomic bombs produce heat millions of degrees high, and visible ultraviolet and infrared rays. (Lapp 844) Everyone and everything exposed to their blast is affected. No one is left untouched, whether it be emotional or physical; in many cases both. However, many members of the science community argue that the atomic bomb was a great advance in technology, and see their effect on Hiroshima and Nagasaki as a scientific experiment. People from the defense department in government also see the bomb as great weapons in national defense. When reading my paper, you must decide for yourself the moral issues involved with using atomic bombs in warfare. The day after the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, it rained all day. The rain was pitch black, and very cold. (Pacific War Research Society (PWRS) 245) A huge cloud of dust covered the sun and made what was left of the city very dark. Realizing the bomb's effect on climate, a group of scientists came up with the "Nuclear Winter Theory" in 1983. (Glasstone NPG) The theory states that if only one half the nuclear warheads in the United States were exploded, there would be enough smoke and dust in the atmosphere to block sunlight for several months destroying all plant life and creating a subfreezing climate until the dust dispersed. (Glasstone NPG) According to the "Nuclear Winter Theory," that would be the end of human civilization! (Glasstone NPG) Although the US Department of Defense acknowledges the validity of this theory they say that it won't affect its defense policies on how many warheads are kept. (Glasstone NPG) Although atomic bombs can have a catastrophic effect on climate, we learned that their effect on buildings is almost as bad. With the bombings in World War 2,

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we saw their effect on historic landmarks, houses, and office buildings. When the bomb was dropped only one mile away from ground zero, the blast cracked walls over twelve inches thick.(Lapp 843) The shockwave after the bomb was felt over a mile away. Heat incinerated everything within a 500 yard radius of the hypocenter. In Hiroshima, the blast demolished all buildings except those that were earthquake resistant.(Lapp 843) Some buildings just " vanished" into air.(PWRS 243)However terrible the effect of atomic bombs on climate and buildings, what stands out most in our minds about atomic bombs is usually the people. On August 6th, 1945, an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. Although the immediate results were horrifying enough, scientists had not even begun to realize the massive effects it would have on humans in the long term.(PWRS NPG) The immediate effects on Hiroshima's people were just a foreshadowing of the ones to come. 150, 000 people were killed instantly. Those who survived the initial blast, died later from high doses of radiation, which burns off skin and hair and destroys almost all internal organs.(Beagley 241) After the blast, those who survived it had no clothes, hair, or skin because they had been totally burned off.(PWRS 242) In many cases, the injuries from buildings collapsing were as bad as those from the actual radiation blast.(Hersey 36) Years after the blast, children whose parents had been exposed to the radiation, had an extremely high rate of mental retardation, leukemia, and non Hodgkin's lymphoma.(Begley 3) Surviving children were also born with abnormally small heads.(Begley 2) Needless to say, the atomic bomb's effect on people was ultimately the worst. In conclusion of this paper, I'd like to clarify a few things. Although the science and government communities have very good reasons for using atomic bombs, it is my personal opinion that

their reasons can never be good enough to justify the lives of millions of innocent people. I hope that not just the American people, but all people can learn a lesson from our mistake with nuclear warfare and its horrific effects on society. Millions of people's lives were changed forever with that one push of a button that released the bomb. Perhaps the worst tragedy involved with atomic bombs was the loss of thousands of children. They were the future, and they had to deal with problems no child should ever have to face: battling terrible diseases, and the loss of friends, parents, siblings, and a lot of the time, their own lives. The invention of the atomic bomb changed society and the future in a very drastic way. Hopefully, we will be able to learn from our past mistakes to create a better future for all human kind.