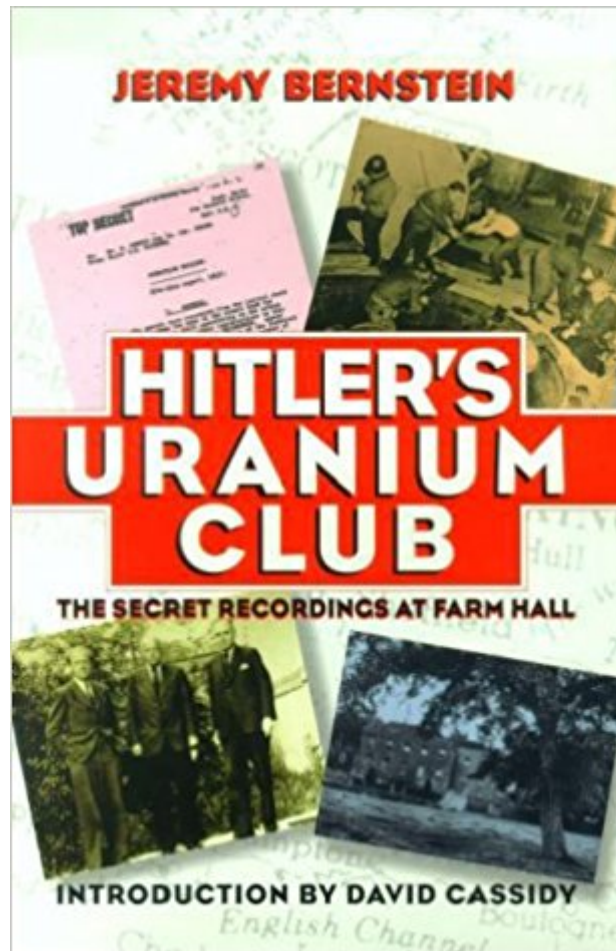




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Hitler's Uranium Club: The Secret Recordings At Farm Hall



Synopsis

This book contains annotated transcripts of the Farm Hall conversations, and brings insights into the progress of the German bomb project during World War II, the thoughts of German scientists during that time, and their attempts to grapple with what they had done (and not done) as participants in the Reich's war effort.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Upon hearing about the Hiroshima bomb, the German nuclear physicists were astounded, and voluble about figuring out how the weapon worked. Their reactions were secretly taped, and after 50 years, their conversations about nuclear physics and Nazi politics were released. This, their first book-form appearance, broadly consists of Bernstein's summary of prewar physics and the German nuclear research program (including a turning-point, 1942 Heisenberg lecture to Nazi officials), and at the core are 25 transcripts drafted by the monitors. The most dramatic are those of August 6 and 7, 1945, into which Bernstein (a qualified scientist) inserts his commentary on the accuracy of the Germans' remarks, as well as his indignation at the rationalization by some of them that they purposely failed in order to prevent a Hitler victory. Bernstein's obiter dicta make clear his disbelief in ethical compunctions, but readers can at last reach their own conclusion. Heavily technical in patches, yet this one-of-a-kind document earns large libraries' consideration with its human-interest aspects. Gilbert Taylor

Captured and detained by the Allies, ten German atomic scientists joined the rest of the world in

astonishment as they learned that a U. S. Air Force bomber had just dropped a nuclear weapon on Hiroshima, Japan. Many of these men had worked on a Nazi nuclear reactor project, but they were now being held at Farm Hall, an English country manor used by British intelligence. Eavesdropping on these men and recording their conversations, the Allies learned how close the Nazis came in their failed attempt to build an atomic bomb and how much the Germans knew about the Allies' research efforts. Kept under wraps until 1992, records of these top-secret conversations are fully explored for the first time in Hitler's Uranium Club: The Secret Recordings At Farm Hall. Providing the first expertly annotated transcripts of the Farm Hall conversations, Hitler's Uranium Club brings fresh insights into the progress of the German bomb project during World War II, the thoughts of German scientists during that time, and their attempts to grapple with the postwar era. -- Midwest Book Review

Very absorbing account of the taped (bugged) conversations of German scientists held in detention in the U.K. at the end of the war. Interesting discussions of the making of a reactor and the bomb with much insight into the mindsets of the scientists, including Heisenberg, Gerlach, von Weizsacker, von Laue and Hahn. Not too technical for the lay reader.

Very interesting to read what the German scientists said and the slant taken on the moral high ground. The author did a fine job of describing the complicated parts in layman's terms.

First rate by the author who really knows the history.

As I expected!

Excellent work - historically and personally. I can recommend this book to all readers interested in the topic of History of Science in the 20th century. (And I know the facts, as I published 8 books on Otto Hahn, who was my grandfather).

Well Done, interesting, a great look into the German Atomic project. Interesting that was a JV effort.

This book consists of expertly annotated transcripts of conversations of German scientists taken at Farm Hall after the end of the WWII in Europe. The book is based on the recently de-classified "Farm Hall Transcripts", a revealing set of informative statements which demonstrates the low level

of understanding that the German Scientists had of how to build Atomic Bombs. It is written and annotated by an American physicist, so you get some insights as to Heisenberg's mistakes. The book is a refutation of the book "Heisenberg's War" by Thomas Powers, a revisionist history that claims that Heisenberg, Germany's top scientist, really knew how an Atomic Bomb worked, but withheld this information from his colleagues and the German Government. Heisenberg remains a mystery. He won a Nobel Prize in Physics in the early 1930s for his "Uncertainty Principle" which deals with Quantum Mechanics. Yet despite his brilliance, he sounds pretty ignorant at Farm Hall. Was he faking? I think not. To paraphrase Watergate: the question still is "What did Werner Heisenberg know and when did he know it? At Farm Hall, when he found out about Hiroshima, his ego deflated like an untied balloon. His comments were made at a vulnerable and candid moment. They reveal a knowledge one would expect from someone you picked at random at a shopping mall. The Manhattan Project was at least as much engineering as science, and Heisenberg was more of a theologian than a nuts 'n bolts guy. But hey, don't take my word for it. If you are really interested, I recommend this book along with "Heisenberg's War" so you get both sides. Then read "Alsos" by Samuel Goudschmidt, the scientific leader of the famous Alsos Mission, who along with Col. Boris T. Pash ("The Alsos Mission"), followed the allied armies into France and captured Heisenberg and the others. Goudschmidt was a physicist who offered the earliest (1947) and perhaps the most philosophical postmortem on the German A-bomb "program".

This book is about the history of the German effort to develop an atomic bomb. It shows how the Germans were on the wrong track and how their management was very poor. It also shows how far behind they were in the field of physics technology. For instance they did not have a single cyclotron. What they needed was a person like general Groves who was able to get all the necessary funding for the effort, and assemble a great team of scientists.

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