

A black and white aerial photograph of a nuclear mushroom cloud. The cloud is large and billowing, with a bright white core at the top. The surrounding landscape is dark and appears to be a desert or a similar arid region. The text "Toward An Anthropology of the Second Nuclear Age" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font at the top of the image.

Toward An Anthropology of the Second Nuclear Age

Hugh Gusterson

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Hortense Amsterdam House 202

The decision to end nuclear testing marked the transition from the first nuclear age to the second, and to a global security regime dominated by concerns about nuclear proliferation rather than by an arms race between two superpowers. It was by no means a foregone conclusion that nuclear testing would end. Based on interviews with top decision-makers, as well as ethnographic fieldwork at the nuclear weapons laboratories, this talk explains how the decision was made to end nuclear testing. It also explores the implications of this decision for nuclear deterrence and for the nuclear weapons laboratories.

Hugh Gusterson is Professor of Anthropology and Sociology at George Mason University. Among his books are *People of the Bomb: Portraits of America's Nuclear Complex* and *The Insecure American*.