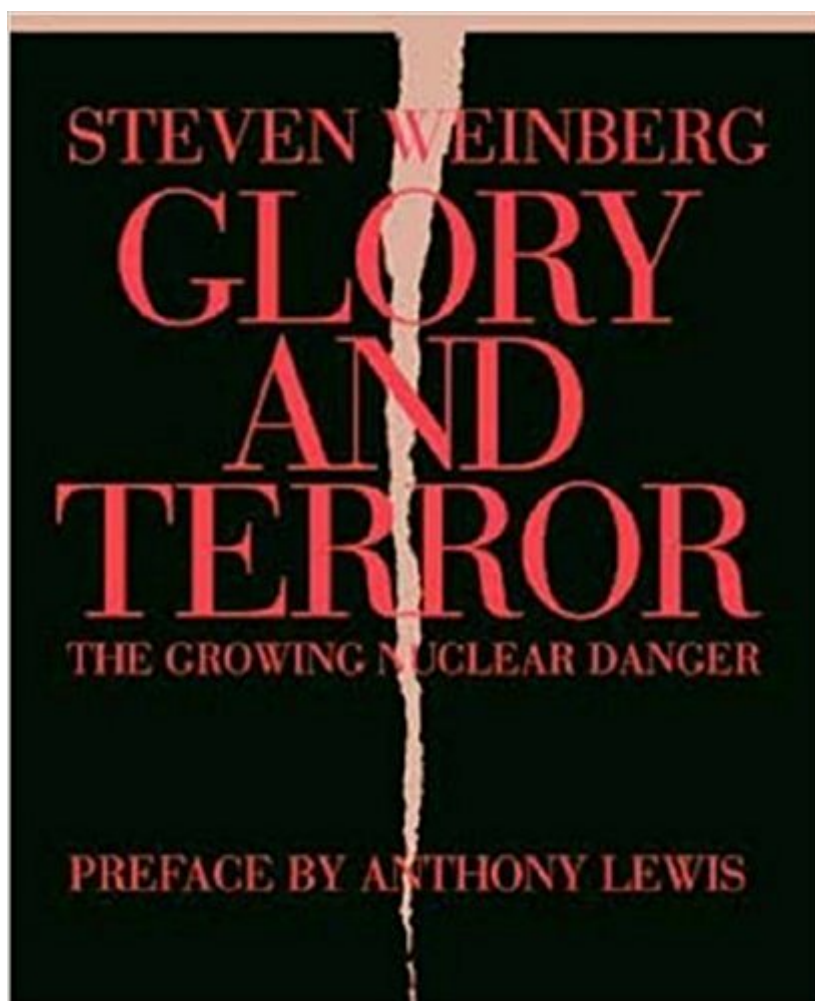


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Glory And Terror: The Growing Nuclear Danger



Synopsis

Steven Weinberg, the Nobel Prize-winning physicist, writes that America today "has an unprecedented opportunity to begin to escape from the risk of nuclear annihilation." But, he warns, President Bush is not only letting this opportunity slip away, he is, in some respects, moving in the wrong direction. Bush's abrogation of the 1972 treaty limiting anti-ballistic missile systems is one example. Another, equally worrying, is the "revival of the idea of developing nuclear weapons for use, rather than solely for deterrence." The development of low-yield, earth-penetrating nuclear weapons for use in attacking underground bunkers "would be foolishness on a scale that even medieval knights might find implausible," Weinberg argues. Such weapons would be "one sort of folly to which war is especially well suited: the lust for glory." The temptation to prize military glamour over sensible strategy has always been with us, as Weinberg shows in examples from the Middle Ages onward, but may have a particularly dangerous effect on defense policies in our age of high-tech armaments. Anthony Lewis writes in his preface concerning these proposed weapons: "In the face of official folly so great, most of us tend to turn off. The subject is too difficult, and too frightening. But Steven Weinberg does not turn off. He grapples with the danger and the folly in understandable and elegant prose."

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Customer Reviews

In the face of official folly so great, most of us tend to turn off. The subject is too difficult, and too frightening. But Steven Weinberg does not turn off. He grapples with the danger and the folly in

understandable and elegant prose. — Anthony Lewis

Steven Weinberg holds the Josey Regental Chair in Science at the University of Texas at Austin. He has been awarded the Nobel Prize in physics and the National Medal of Science. His latest book for general readers is *Lake Views: This World and the Universe*.

This book is a reprint of two essays Steven Weinberg, a Nobel laureate in physics, wrote for the New York Review of Books on the danger of nuclear war. Dr. Weinberg shows an impressive knowledge of military history, but I can't endorse his solution. He argues that missile defense is a costly program doomed to failure, underground "bunker busters" are impractical, and that the only solution is mutual disarmament. I respectfully disagree. I believe that America does need a system of missile defense and I do not think in this dangerous world that reducing our arsenal is a good idea. I still suggest reading *Glory and Terror*, but with a skeptical mind.

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