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Naval Postgraduate School Historical Highlights: CROSSROADS: Prepare for the Atomic Age

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CROSSROADS: Prepare for the Atomic Age

A recent gift to Dudley Knox Library from the estate of W.D. Duthie, former Chair of the Department of Aerology and later the Department of Meteorology and Oceanography, included his dissertation and a number of circa 1950’s aerology publications and “notes” (aka textbooks) that he prepared for NPS students learning how to analyze weather maps and charts.

But it was the special Atomic Bomb Test Extra issue (dated 1 July 1946) of ALL HANDS: the Bureau of Naval Personnel Information Bulletin that caught our eye – an issue devoted to bringing the topic of "nucleonics" to the Navy, to coincide with atomic testing at Bikini Atoll to begin on that date. In the largest U.S. atomic field tests to date, 75 vessels and 42,000 personnel sought to learn how the atomic threat "might prove changes necessary in any phase of material design or naval operations." This special issue was also a call to action, inviting sailors to "LEARN SCIENCE" because "this 'Buck Rogers' era demands men [sic] with technical training."

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