



**Brack, H.G.**

**NUCLEAR INFORMATION  
HANDBOOK: *A Guide to  
Accident Terminology and  
Information Sources***

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Nuclear-power researcher Brack presents an enlightening survey of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear crisis and its context within recent nuclear-power disasters and snafus. This vital resource is the fruit of Brack's years investigating and writing on nuclear power and "the industrial history of a nation that perfected the manufacture of hand tools and atomic weapons but failed to design and build safe nuclear reactors, including those it exported to other countries such as Japan." It starts with a synopsis of the Fukushima Daiichi accident that resulted from the massive earthquake and tsunami that devastated parts of Japan in March 2011. The book intends to allow nonexperts to get a handle on the flood of information regarding the event, and to gauge the meaning of microsieverts, nanograys and becquerels when one is trying to understand the health physics involved. The author takes a slow stroll through the event sequence at Fukushima Daiichi, exploring architectural design and estimated release data, and sets them against the radiological impact of the Chernobyl meltdown. Before he closely examines the effects of Chernobyl, Brack tenders a concise, readable number of definitions and concepts related to nuclear technology—from the gamma camera to quick-release accidents to stochastic and nonstochastic effects to transuranic elements to cold shutdown and vitrification. Readers will need this understanding to negotiate the waters of the Chernobyl-derived contamination history, with radiological evidence from lichen to mother's milk, and the author provides enough well-vetted source material—most of it available on the Internet—to keep readers busy and terrified for years to come. Then he gives a close reading of the decommissioning of the Maine Yankee Atomic Power Plant—a facility close to his home base in Hulls Cove, Maine—and how it exemplifies the "significant loss of radiological controls" that occur during everyday nuclear-reactor operation. Brack's revelations in this radical tome will make readers' skin crawl.

Powerful and indispensable—a serious antidote to the recent feel-good murmurings voiced on nuclear power's behalf.