



# Bomboozled: How the U.S. Government Misled Itself and Its People into Believing They Could Survive a Nuclear Attack

By Susan Roy

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## **Bomboozled: How the U.S. Government Misled Itself and Its People into Believing They Could Survive a Nuclear Attack** By Susan Roy

Conceived by a misguided government seeking to quiet the fears of an anxious public, the concept of the Family Fallout Shelter was Cold War paranoia at its finest, a massive bit of propaganda by architecture that has no more truth behind it than the absurd notion of duck and cover. Inundated with government-sponsored films, posters, booklets, traveling caravans and exhibitions, the American family bought into the idea, investing millions of dollars in home shelters of every conceivable material and design. *Bomboozled: How the U.S. Government Misled Itself and Its People Into Believing They Could Survive a Nuclear Attack* lays bare the buried truths of America's family fallout shelter obsession. Author Susan Roy charts the panic-fueled evolution of the shelter from a well-stocked basement pantry to a full-fledged (and often completely decorated) home addition, revealing through extensive archival photography, nuclear-era memorabilia, and previously unpublished media, a government and people in the grip of self-delusion. Fastidiously researched and sharply written, *Bomboozled* captures the absurdity and uncertainty of a culture that knew no better than to trust its government's message. Susan Roy is a writer and editor on architecture, design, and cultural history. The founding managing editor of *Allure* magazine, she has also held senior editorial positions at *This Old House*, *SELF*, *Good Housekeeping* and *Avenue*. She holds a master's degree in architectural history from Columbia University; *Bomboozled* is loosely based on the subject of her master's thesis, *The Family Fallout Shelter During the Cold War*.

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### **Editorial Review**

#### **Review**

Roy argues that the fallout shelter campaign was designed less to protect the citizenry than to groom them into becoming "Citizen Cold Warriors," ready to accept and endure a more militarized society. (June)  
--Publisher's Weekly

"Susan Roy pairs illustrations with incisive commentary to reveal just how deluded we used to be about prepping for the all-too-thinkable nuclear attack." — O, The Oprah Magazine

"An enticing visual history of the fallout shelter, which allowed cold war anxiety to be cheerfully reconfigured as a home story and gave the phrase 'nuclear family' new meaning...a piquant analysis of nuclear housekeeping." — The New York Times

"Bomboozled" actually does bring back lots of memories and a certain anger that we were so bamboozled by so many who had something to gain from our primal fears. The book addresses...how industry collaborated with government to scare the bejeesus out of us, and then convince us everything would be just fine - if we protected ourselves with expensive products." — The Atlantic

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