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## Book Catalog

# Secret Mesa

## Inside Los Alamos National Laboratory

By Jo Ann Shroyer

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Date: 1998 ISBN: 0-471-04063-0

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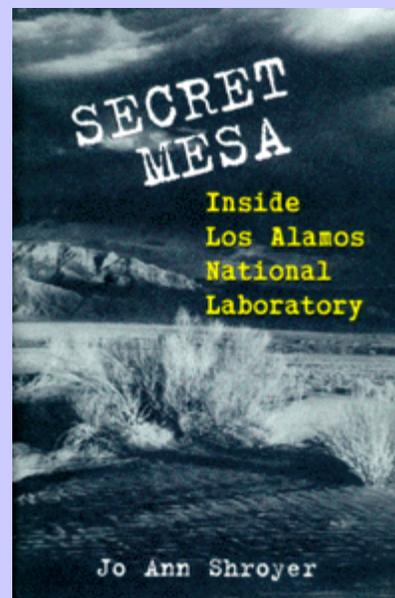
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## Our Review

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Credibility	Research Value	Cultural Interest	Visual Information	Style	Silliness	Wow Factor	Bargain
<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
Very High	Very High	Very High	None	Stylish	Very Low	Interesting	Moderate

### [Explanation of Ratings](#)

**Credibility = Very High:** In general, this category is a rating of the author's intellectual discipline and the strength of his argument (which are very high), not the veracity of his claims (which could be false in spite of the strong argument).

A reporter's tour of Los Alamos and the society that surrounds it. While other books describe the history of top secret laboratory, this is the only one we know of that profiles its modern culture and conflicts. This is the first book to read for a general introduction to Los Alamos.

## Reservations

No photos. The price seems a bit high, but is probably worth it for Los Alamos fans.

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## Information from the Publisher

Always supportive

## From the Book Cover

"It's easy to feel watched in Los Alamos. During my first visit to the town several years ago, I stopped by the side of the road to take a picture of what I thought was just the Santa Fe National Forest. A small pickup truck did a quick U-turn and parked next to me until I left. When this happened again on another public highway in the area, I began to wonder whose woods these really were.

"Later I learned that the technical areas of Los Alamos National Laboratory extend far beyond the obvious cluster of gray and tan buildings at its center. They are spread out over forty-three square miles of woods and canyons and are hemmed in by national forest and parklands. It turns out I was nowhere near the heavily guarded areas of the lab, where picture taking would be econsidered a threat to national security. But I was quietly watched, nonetheless."

Created as a top-secret outpost on a desolate mesa in the New Mexico desert—exclusively for the purpose of assembling the world's first atomic weapon—Los Alamos was transformed during the Cold War into a high-powered science complex and full-blown "company town," with a population of 20,000, covering 43 square miles, including schools, stores, churches, even a private ski slope. Los Alamos is a world unto itself, rife with contradictions, haunted by its history, yet bustling with an astonishing range of forefront science projects, from cancer research to robotic ants. Shroyer has conducted extensive interviews and research, including repeated trips to the laboratory, and her thoughtful, elegant writing offers a probing exploration of the intense, complicated life behind these closed doors.

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