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“A first-rate, completely coherent, extremely well-researched, and compellingly lucid contribution to our understanding of American literature during the Cold War.”

—**Alan Nadel, University of Kentucky, author of *Containment Culture: American Narratives, Postmodernism, and the Atomic Age***

“*On Endings* is a very fine book exhibiting two virtues quite difficult to combine: first, a magisterial command of a substantial body of literature on postmodern fiction, nuclear proliferation, and the Cold War; and second, a laserlike focus on a single key point or problem upon which much of the originality of postmodern fiction turns: the problem of futurelessness, the actual prospect of an empty world—empty, at least, of human beings.

The execution of the argument could hardly be stronger, and the topic could hardly be more important.”—**Mark McGurl, UCLA**

ON ENDINGS

Reading American Fiction After the Bomb

Concerned with the culture and sociopolitical climate of the second half of the twentieth century, **ON ENDINGS (September 2011; UVA Press)** by Daniel Grausam examines critical attitudes toward postmodern fiction and situates the highly innovative movement against conventional narratives concerned with the representation of reality.

Asking what narrative looks like when the possibility of an expansive future has been called into question, Grausam seeks to show how the core texts of American postmodernism are a response to the geopolitical dynamics of the Cold War and especially to the new potential for total nuclear conflict. Postwar American fiction needs to be rethought, Grausam argues, by highlighting postmodern experimentation as a mode of profound historical consciousness. *ON ENDINGS* significantly extends the project of historicizing postmodernism while returning the nuclear to a central place in the study of the Cold War.

Daniel Grausam is assistant professor of English at Washington University in St. Louis and the coeditor of the forthcoming *American Literature and Culture in an Age of Cold War*.

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