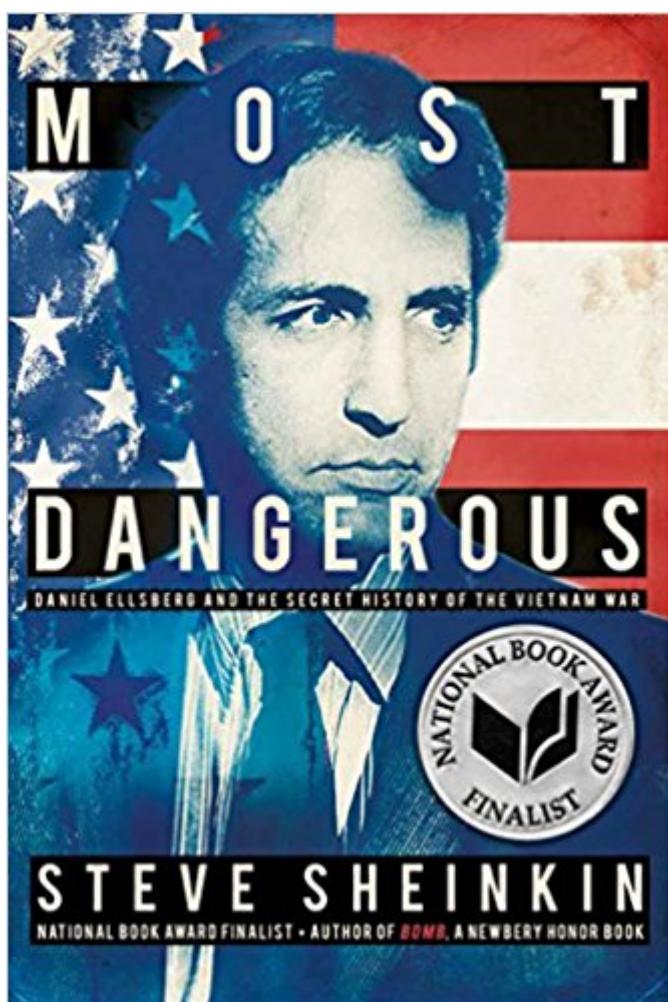


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Most Dangerous: Daniel Ellsberg And The Secret History Of The Vietnam War (Bccb Blue Ribbon Nonfiction Book Award (Awards))



Synopsis

This captivating nonfiction investigation of the Pentagon Papers has captured widespread critical acclaim, including features in The Washington Post and on NPR, selection as a 2015 National Book Award finalist, and selection as winner of the 2016 YALSA Excellence in Nonfiction Award. From Steve Sheinkin, the award-winning author of The Port Chicago 50 and Newbery Honor Book Bomb comes a tense, narrative nonfiction account of what the Times deemed "the greatest story of the century": how whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg transformed from obscure government analyst into "the most dangerous man in America," and risked everything to expose years of government lies during the Nixon / Cold War era. On June 13, 1971, the front page of the New York Times announced the existence of a 7,000-page collection of documents containing a secret history of the Vietnam War. Known as The Pentagon Papers, these files had been commissioned by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara. Chronicling every action the government had taken in the Vietnam War, they revealed a pattern of deception spanning over twenty years and four presidencies, and forever changed the relationship between American citizens and the politicians claiming to represent their interests. The investigation that resulted--as well as the attempted government coverups and vilification of the whistleblower--has timely relevance to Edward Snowden's more recent conspiracy leaks. A provocative and political book that interrogates the meanings of patriotism, freedom, and integrity, *Most Dangerous* further establishes Steve Sheinkin as a leader in children's nonfiction. This thoroughly-researched and documented book can be worked into multiple aspects of the common core curriculum.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 7 Up  In this thoroughly researched, thoughtfully produced, and beautifully written book, Sheinkin delves into the life of Daniel Ellsberg, former Pentagon consultant and a self-described "cold warrior," who gradually made an about-face with regard to America's presence in Vietnam. Ellsberg famously leaked the Pentagon Papers, a lengthy document written by military insiders about the Vietnam War, to various members of the press in 1971. He was quickly labeled an enemy of the state and a traitor to his country, aka the most dangerous man in America. With access to many of the key players in this real-life drama, as well as mountains of source material, Sheinkin builds a narrative that is at once accessible and suspenseful, with revelations and details coming at just the right moments. In Sheinkin's careful hands, Ellsberg and others, including Richard Nixon, Henry Kissinger, and Robert McNamara, are fully realized characters with strengths, flaws, and motivations that grow ever more clear as the story unfolds. Direct quotes, primary source documents, and archival photographs are peppered throughout, supplementing and complementing the text. Meticulous source notes indicate the level of research and time that the author has put into this particular work. With the news filled with stories about Edward Snowden and the NSA, Julian Assange and WikiLeaks, and privacy rights and government overreach, this brilliant work about an extraordinary whistle-blower taking a stand should be on everyone's reading list. VERDICT A timely and extraordinary addition to every library.  Jody Kopple, Shady Hill School, Cambridge, MA

Finalist for the 2015 Los Angeles Times Book Prize for Young Adult Literature
A National Book Award Finalist
Selected for the 2016 Notable Social Studies Trade Books for Young People List  "Lively, detailed prose rooted in a tremendous amount of research, fully documented. . . . Easily the best study of the Vietnam War available for teen readers."  Kirkus Reviews, starred review  "Sheinkin has done again what he does so well: condense mountains of research into a concise, accessible, and riveting account of history. . . [This book] will keep readers racing forward."  Publishers Weekly, starred review  "Powerful and thought-provoking."  Booklist, starred review  "Fast-paced and fascinating. . . backed up by meticulous research."  VOYA, starred review "Thoroughly researched, thoughtfully produced, and beautifully written . . . a timely and extraordinary addition to every library."  School & Library Journal, starred review "Immediate and compelling . . . Here, [Sheinkin] has outdone even himself."  Horn

Book, starred review "A thrilling ride." *Booklist*, starred review "Sheinkin's most compelling one yet." *The Washington Post* "Young people in the United States are growing up in a vastly changed world, one where endless war and all-pervasive surveillance is a matter of course. 'Most Dangerous' will help them understand how it has become so." *The New York Times* Book Review

This is my first book review, but I felt compelled to write one for this book. Steve Sheinkin has done a great job of synthesizing a huge amount of information, often with contradictory perspectives, and his book is both historically accurate and an exciting read. I would recommend it to anyone, regardless of their age, who wants to understand the history of the Pentagon Papers. As a matter of full-disclosure, I am not exactly unbiased. Daniel Ellsberg is my father and I lived through the events described by the book (I was 10 years old when my brother Robert and I helped Dad copy the Pentagon Papers and was 14 by the end of the trial.) I am used to finding annoying and sloppy mistakes in nearly every account I've ever read of this period, and I was very pleasantly surprised by the even-handedness and meticulous accuracy of the book.

I was a small child when Ellsberg leaked the Pentagon papers so I really didn't know anything about it. My father is a Vietnam vet who served bravely. It makes me so mad to read about all the lies that perpetuated that war. It took my dad away for a year of our lives, and took many away forever, and for what!? Politics! This is well written and still relevant today in light of what Edward Snowden did. Definitely well worth reading.

A fantastic read full of drama and excitement. I read this with my 9.5 year old and it was a perfect selection that brought about many dinner table and drive-time conversations about government and our responsibilities as citizens. Ellsberg exposed the lies that through three presidencies that both launched and then continued the US involvement in the Vietnam conflict. This fascinating history about Ellsberg and his struggle with exposing the truth about Vietnam reads like a spy novel. Ellsberg wanted to expose the truth about Vietnam and ended up ending a presidency. (The Plumbers!) Sheinkin's writing is superb and you should check out his other books including "The Bomb" and "The Notorious Benedict Arnold: A True Story of Adventure, Heroism & Treachery" both also excellent reads that both inform and entertain.

I got this for my students but it's been very helpful to myself as well and is very up to date. Honestly,

it's probably best that my education never got around to covering Vietnam since so much has been propaganda. We now know what really happened and if you care to find out you can read this book, then read all the references it cites that you find of interest.

I don't usually enjoy books about wars, but this one was engaging and eerily familiar as I considered what is currently happening in the White House. I was born long after the Vietnam War, so this book was a must-read for me, to build my understanding of an important part of American history. Thanks for the information and the perspective.

Perhaps not so well....at any rate despite my failing memory, this is a great read. It recalls a significant part of my personal history: The Vietnam War. Sadly America didn't seem to learn a lot...

Well written and astonishing information. I was a high school student when most of this stuff took place. I guess I expected more truth sharing than occurred.. It was disappointing to realize that that horrible war was allowed to continue to save face for the presidents. After I began my career as a nurse I encountered the horrible way our society behaved toward the veterans who fought and died for this. I get sick when I see the countless young men sacrificed for political gain in a war we could not win.

I found it very enlightening. I was a kid when all this happened. so I had heard a little about it, but did not know the facts and time line. Personally, I had to take a grain of salt with many things the book said, such as why LBJ would add half a million troops to Vietnam shortly after taking office, yet the book takes great pains to paint the picture of how much he did not want to continue to the war there. Hmm. However, I think its a good book on your path to finding what this was about and an introduction to the deceptions of government. Just don't take it as gospel.

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