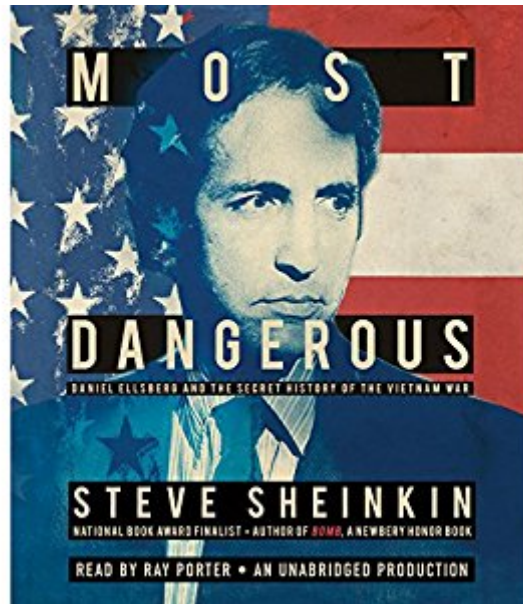


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Most Dangerous: Daniel Ellsberg And The Secret History Of The Vietnam War



Synopsis

From Steve Sheinkin, the award-winning author of *The Port Chicago 50* and *Bomb*, comes a tense, exciting exploration of what the Times deemed "the greatest story of the century": how Daniel Ellsberg transformed from obscure government analyst into "the most dangerous man in America" and risked everything to expose the government's deceit. 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 documents 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 20 years and four presidencies and forever changed the relationship between American citizens and the politicians claiming to represent their interests. A provocative audiobook that interrogates the meanings of patriotism, freedom, and integrity, *Most Dangerous* further establishes Steve Sheinkin as a leader in children's nonfiction.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I love non-fiction, but it is a rare event that I can't stop reading a non-fiction book. *Most Dangerous: Daniel Ellsberg and the Secret History of the Vietnam War* by Steve Sheinkin is the exception to that rule. I started reading *Most Dangerous* over the weekend and was entirely unproductive until I turned the last page of this book. Marketed as a young adult book, this book was totally fascinating to me as an adult, and my husband is now enjoying it as well. Sheinkin is a master of making

non-fiction books come to life. His book *Bomb: The Race to Build - and Steal - The World's Most Dangerous Weapon* has received many awards. *Most Dangerous* is a book of that caliber. Daniel Ellsberg is a name that was new to me. However, as soon as I was done reading I called my mother, who recognized his name but no longer remembered the specifics of his role in Vietnam. My brief summary will not do justice to this book, but Sheinkin very easily breaks down what led to the war and the United States' role in it, and to Ellsberg's role in the war. At first Ellsberg supports the war, but after traveling to Vietnam and seeing the devastation done to innocent citizens his stance changes. His connections in Washington allow him access to highly confidential documents - and after he reads them he is even more certain of the need to end the war in Vietnam. Ellsberg also believes American citizens have a right to know what their government has been hiding. But sharing the documents is against the law, and may eventually lead to Ellsberg's arrest. Sheinkin was able to create suspense as to how this story will end, despite the fact that the ending already occurred several decades ago. I found myself racing to the end as quickly as I could.

Daniel Ellsberg is an important person in American history. However, I have no recollection of hearing about him when I was in school (I am a child of the 80's). Now that I am a teacher, I have my students learn about him when we discuss whistleblowers as critical thinkers. For those that do not know, Daniel Ellsberg blew the whistle against the United States government by giving newspapers access to the Pentagon Papers, which was a top secret study of nearly 30 years of decision making and foreign policy analysis involving the United States and Vietnam. The file was so secret, it is assumed that even the President had not read it. While working for the Rand Corporation, Ellsberg photocopied nearly 7,000 pages and distributed the documents to newspaper around the country towards the end of the Vietnam War when it became apparent that the U.S was not going to reverse their failed strategy. This book, by Steve Sheinkin, tells the story of how Ellsberg became active in politics, Ellsberg's trips to Vietnam and what he saw there, and the events that led to Ellsberg's trial and eventual release by the courts. The book also includes the stories of President Nixon, Henry Kissinger, and those involved with the Watergate scandal (as it turns out, before they went after Watergate, the same people attempted to run a smear campaign against Ellsberg by stealing documents from a psychologist). Vine labeled this as a "Children's Book," and its page says 10-14 years old. I am guessing that this book is designed for the higher age limit in that range. I cannot imagine many 10 year olds reading this book (but then again, I do not know many 10 year olds, so maybe I am wrong here).

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