The Most Dangerous Man in America: Daniel Ellsberg and the Pentagon Papers

Watch the Trailer

PBS Broadcast: June 7, 2011

Synopsis

In 1971, Daniel Ellsberg, a leading Vietnam War strategist, concludes that America's role in the war is to resign and the end of the Vietnam War. Ellsberg and a who's-who of Vietnam-era movers and shakers changed events in POV's The Most Dangerous Man in America: Daniel Ellsberg and the Pentagon Papers filmmakers Judith Ehrlich (The Good War and Those Who Refused to Fight It) and Rick Goldsmith (Tell the American Press). A co-production of ITVS in association with American Documentary | POV.

Please note: This is an encore broadcast. Not all PBS stations choose to rebroadcast encore presentations weeks before June 7 to see whether this show will be airing. The Most Dangerous Man in America had

5, 2010.

(90 minutes)

Read the full film description »

Send me a reminder about the broadcast

TAGS: daniel ellsberg, howard zinn, nixon, pentagon papers, vietnam
NPR had a nice review of "The Most Dangerous Man in America" and an interview with filmmakers Judith Ehrlich and Rick Goldsmith yesterday.

Excerpt: *Forever defined by a single action, Daniel Ellsberg is known as the man who blew the whistle on the Vietnam War. But neither Ellsberg's choice nor its execution was simple, as Judith Ehrlich and Rick Goldsmith's Oscar-nominated documentary reveals. [Read more »]*

Please put up the film for free.... People need to see this... its more important than the monetary compensation of the production... please.. NOW!!!!

www.thezeitgeistmovement.com

http://www.zeitgeistmovie.com/


I TOTALLY agree!! That's why nothing changes! Too much focus on $$ and not what needs to be done!

Juan Ramon Beristain 06/13/2010 03:29 PM

It is great that we finally know the truth. I will love to see more about the Nicaragua-Contras, the Irak war...

Thank you.
Will we be able to see this in the UK?

I'm so glad that this film is Out! As a follower of God, (I cannot use the word Christian anymore since this word has been kidnapped by people who hurt the powerless and innocent),

I am delighted to see truth out and lies exposed.

I think this film will reach an audience who otherwise refuses to get out of their box. I've only seen the trailer and I cannot wait to see the complete movie.

That's the biggest copout I ever heard

To be branded America's most dangerous man by Henry Kissinger and to be called a traitor by Richard Nixon, two of the most dangerous people in the history of the human race, is praise indeed.

This documentary is more timely than ever, in light of the revelations of what our leaders did in our name and with our tax dollars in Guatemala.

As disgusted as I am by many of our political leaders, I still believe in our political and legal system. I still believe that many of our elected officials are good, honest, humane people. And I value our open society, in which the truth does eventually emerge.

With respect for the common people of Guatemala, Vietnam, and the United States,

Ray Pence
Got to see Daniel Ellsberg in the wee village of Mendocino this past year, and the film too. Double treat for all of us old "movers and shakers"!! One of my heros...

Hi,

Just to remember, from Wikipedia:

He (Henry KISSINGER) was awarded the 1973 Nobel Peace Prize for helping to establish a ceasefire and US withdrawal from Vietnam.

So, what should be the right recognition for Daniel??

What I appreciate in this movie, apart the fact that Daniel contribute to end this war, is his capability to change his mind through the years and start fighting against the government with a great courage. I would really want shake Daniel's hand and tell him how much I appreciate his courage!

I do really hope to watch this documentary in Italy!

In 1986 I won the first false Claims Act lawsuit U.S.C. 3730 in Unites States History coined "Mr. Lincoln's Law". This case was the most serious Defense Fraud in the history of our nation. On April 15, 1986 during the Libyan Bombing Raid many of the H.A.R.M Missiles failed and miss their targets due to the fraud that took place during the manufacturing if this missile system. At that time there was even speculation in January of 1986 that the explosion of the Space Shuttle may have been cause by what had happened because of this fraud. You can go to YouTube and type in my name and see 60 Minutes interview and CNN interview along with other news clips & 100's of news paper and magazine articles. LONG LIVE THE FALSE CLAIMS ACT!

I can't wait to see this PBS program! POV is a series that never disappoints.
Daniel Ellsberg is a name that commands respect. Ellsberg will be remembered as one of the bravest men in US history. He has the gratitude of multitudes!

Edward Maynard 10/05/2010 03:33 AM

Thank You for catalyzing the will of the people to act !!

Economic Warefair has and is being waged on americans through the Banking Community, what was going on with the Viet Nam War, is still going on today with the Mortgage and foreclosure crises, The pain and suffering economically, it is an undeclared War

and it must be stopped and order restored to the rule of law.

Edward Maynard

Mike 10/05/2010 11:42 AM

I am tired of the beatification of the anti-war movement and their players. This guy leaked thousands of pages of classified information...he should have been shot, not idolized. In 1971, the United States was in position to win the war in Viet Nam despite the having their hands tied by their government and the undermining politicization and media adulation of the anti-war movement. We don't need to defend Nixon or Johnson, but we must elevate the status, courage, and history of the brave Americans who fought and served during that bloody war and who have carried the scars from battle and survival for the past 40+ years. This guy is a POS.

Drffc 01/31/2011 11:25 PM in reply to Mike

Mike, you sound like a veteran with scars remaining to this day. To those poor kids, drafted into a war, dying, maimed and scarred physically and emotionally, my heart is sad for.

But that doesn't change my hatred for the powers who created the vietnam war for profit, on the blood and backs of millions of innocents.

You don't sound like you know the history of Vietnam, which is what the information that Ellsberg "leaked". It showed the huge, vast, differences between what we, the public were being told publically, and the private truth.

Vietnam was a war for liberation by the Vietnamese.
Their struggle was for some thousand years.

First they fought against Chinese domination for hundreds of years.

Then the French colonized them in the 19th century.

When the Japanese invaded them in WWII and threw out the French, Ho Chi Minh fought with the Allies, against the Japanese to help win the war against the Japanese.

After thinking they were on the right side of the coin having fought and won with the Allies, they thought they'd finally, after almost a thousand years, won their independence.

But no.

The French wanted their colony back!

And with arms, money and supplies given by the USA to the French, the first part of the Vietnam war of the Vietnamese against the French began.

When the French got their butts handed to them in 1954 at Dien Bien Phu, the French withdrew.

Again the Vietnamese believed they'd won their freedom.

And again the USA repaid their allegiance to the Allies in WWII by engaging in installing puppet governments, blocking United Nations elections and so much more, as revealed in the Pentagon Papers.

We stayed in 'nam because of the trumped slogan entitled the Domino Theory that stated if Vietnam falls (to communism, gasp!) so falls the rest of SouthEast Asia.

Well ... it didn't happen.

And it was Communist Vietnam that put down the slaughter of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia that was made possible in the first place by Nixon's relentless secret bombing of Cambodia (another illegal act that he lied about publically).

No, Ellsberg is a hero.

If you'd like to contact me personally, let me know and we'll continue this discussion outside of this forum.
being 30 yrs old (in May); I must say that you summed up everything that
high school didn't teach us about the Vietnam war. In fact we learned
nothing of it (Korea either, for that matter). So thank you for your
informative post

queen  10/05/2010 01:53 PM

Amen, Alma. Same Nick from Arizona, I assume. So sad to hear all the hate & lack
of decency in our nation. BTW, Nick, have you ever gone to school? Spelling was
not your favorite subject, I guess. Poor spelling is not a sign of your character, or
lack of, but what you say sure is.

Gnome de Pluehm  10/05/2010 02:20 PM

We can't go back to Daniel Boone's world. He was free of all the things you abhor,
but neighbors, air conditioning, and rapid transit abolishes all that. Put down your
coonskin cap and learn how to live in the world we have.

Helen N. Hanna  10/05/2010 03:02 PM

Daniel Ellsburg is indeed a hero. Like Ellsburg, Bradley Manning recently
understood that the public in a democracy deserves to know, and should accept, the
full truth about our country's military adventures. When we the people fail to seek out
the whole truth, we are neglecting a responsibility that goes hand in hand with our
right to free speech. We have already paid dearly for this neglect. We are living in a
state of dishonesty, a state of perpetual warfare that benefits only the
military/industrial complex. Ike was right.

Ish  10/05/2010 03:13 PM

Another self centered American view of the involvement in Vietnam. I find how
Americans never seem to have a sense of the other side's point of view - the
Vietnamese who welcomed the Americans because they did not want to be part of a
communist regime. These Vietnamese freedom fighters cared not for what the
reason Americans were in their country. They only cared that they fought side by
side to fight for their freedom. I understand how it's such a fad nowadays to seek out
a Utopian society, but seriously, look beyond American opinions and look towards
other country's as well, and you will find that they could care less of how and why the
American government has come to help.

http://www.pbs.org/pov/mostdangerousman/
Uncovering the idiocy of our policies is a noble ideal—far nobler than just swallowing the official line. I am watching the documentary— for unraveling the deceit that passes for truth— and consequently our misguided adventurism and plunder of distant lands.

This comment has been edited for personal attacks.

POV Viewers,

Thanks so much for sharing your feedback about The Most Dangerous Man in America. POV offers this comment board so that viewers can share their thoughts and discuss the topics explored in our programs with other POV viewers. As stated in our Comment Policy (linked from every page), POV encourages conversation and debate around issues, events and ideas related to our documentary films with the following caveats:

- The editorial staff of POV reserves the right to take down or edit comments it deems inappropriate.

- Profanity, personal attacks, hate speech, off-topic posts, advertisements and spam will not be tolerated.

We hope that if you respond to the film or another viewers' comments you will do so in a respectful way. Comments that we feel are personal attacks will be removed from this discussion board.

The Editors

POV Interactive

Slaughter, genocide, concentration and re-education camps; a total bloodbath of millions was what followed our departure from the Viet Nam. Great job Daniel. He may not have really been the most dangerous man to Americans, but he sure got some Vietnamese killed.
I guess nobody ever saw the film The Killing Fields... nor spoken to people from Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, and what happened to them when the US pulled out.

I was in college when Vietnam broke out and the South Vietnamese were rioting to keep the Americans out-check the newspaper archives. Daniel Ellsberg saved countless lives that would have been lost if that lie continued. The lies before, during and after only lead you to believe we have no idea what really happened to the South Vietnamese after the "conflict", never declared a war. American businessmen welcome communism when it serves the almighty dollar-like China.

This is the best documentary I've seen on PBS. Daniel Ellsberg is a focus and leader of his time. I wish there are more people in government like Ellsberg --- especially to uncover the atrocities of the Bush administration. Daniel, I like the phrase "the truth will set you free." I still hope it applies to 21st century time with the American government.

Let me ask if any of these grand journalists ever once tried to find an individual who didn't participate for years in the prosecution of the war all seem to decry, but one who simply quit at their first realization of how wrong and duplicitous Kennedy and McNamara were.

Ellsberg is a guy who got religion late, way too late. His acts accomplished nothing and saved no lives but only provided fodder for pseudo-historical documentaries.

Why can't there be a public television network that broadcasts important documentaries (that attempt to get to scathing political truths) ALL the time. My local PBS station is all cutesy cooking shows and ultra-white-bread junk like Antiques Roadshow and Lawrence Welk reruns! Who isn't starved for serious television.
I am not the most informed person in this country, but I know that the government not only lies to us, but is controlled by business concerns through campaign donations and lobbying. Seeing this show has confirmed this and has given us an information advantage...please continue the good work and things must change.

Thank you!

I was 18 years old when the Pentagon Papers were published, I remember only reading headlines, and then, like all the other media publications about the Vietnam War (here in Canada) quickly dismissed it - I am now 57 years old and with viewing this documentary tonight, need to read more of this and become a whole lot more knowledgeable about what is going on in my own country, my neighbours foreign policies and that of the world in general.

In summary a fantastic documentary - in my opinion Daniel Ellsberg was a hero.
Thank you P.O.V. for bringing these issues and events to light.

The public's right to know v. the governments need to protect states secrets is not the question, it is whether we can have a democracy without adequate checks and balances. www.intheinterestofnationalsec... reveals the true story about the checks and balances limits, and the sudden awareness when the limits have been breeched *(Iran-Contra Affair- or when two of the three branches of government have been compromised or entrapped into public corruption). To the extent wars are abusive of constitutional powers, American citizens hold both Congress and the President accountable when there is only "resolution" for military action rather than an authorized "declaration of war" as required. Yet, most people who do speak out remain "by-standers" due to the fact that we are misdirected into opposition against war rather than forging peace and prosperity...In the words of Washington... "Why quit our own to stand on foreign ground". RJR

What was most meaningful to me was to see this man's journey from war analyst to war resistor. Being much younger, I never realized how courageous the newspapers who printed the Pentagon Papers were and how momentous the Supreme Court's decision to support the First Amendment was. I also never realized how it tied into the Watergate break in and Nixon's resignation. It gave me a really big picture on that time in history
What hovers in the back of my mind is how this applies to the current war on terror, loss of freedoms, and the question - is all this being supported by the government still lying to us? Dan Ellsberg was a true patriot. I would hope I had the same degree of courage and hope I never have to find out.

Jim Collett 10/05/2010 10:49 PM

My father was the Senior Naval Officer in Indochina when the battle of Dien Ben Phu (1955) was fought. His analysis was that we (the US) was on the wrong side. His only comment to me was that that Ho Chi Minh was a national hero to his people in 1955 while they were trying to get the French out of their country. About three years ago, I ran into a retired CIA operative. He said "You know there was an unnamed Navy source who said we had it wrong back then". I'm convinced It was my Dad.

Jim Collett, son of Capt. James Collett USN (deceased)

Robert Landry 10/05/2010 11:00 PM

I love the comment that "we" were poised to win the war in Vietnam. Just what were we to win? A lull in the civil conflict there perhaps? We were under no attack, and there was no threat to our security from that country. What was happening was continuous lying to both congress and the populace regarding the justification and continuing need to continue the murder of thousands of Vietnamese. This does not even consider the breech of a sacred trust in employing our forces under false premise. God bless you Mr. Ellsberg, you are a hero of citizenry!

Carole Ruff 10/05/2010 11:14 PM

As someone who watched the Vietnam War nightly and drew a comparison between Iraq and Vietnam early on - I am stunned that our leadership does not seem to able to apply the lessons learned to our current situation.

So while I found the program facsinating, I'm distressed at its current relevance.

Barbi N 10/05/2010 11:40 PM

This movie proves that you can get away with ratting out the Pentagon. If you can muster up unshakeable nerve and integrity.

http://www.pbs.org/pov/mostdangerousman/
Stella Moore  10/05/2010 11:58 PM

A great documentary. A thrill to see and hear Dr Ellsberg again. A very dangerous man and a great hero. Thank you PBS for not letting us forget him.

Thomas Brennan  10/05/2010 11:59 PM

In 1971 I was an anti-war college graduate, morally and intellectually against the war.

I recently finished reading "Matterhorn", Karl Marlantes' novel of the VietNam war. It gives an emotional glimpse of the personal devastation some of the young men experienced "in the bush".

Tonight's P.O.V brilliant documentary brought it all together for me. I'm left feeling very sad, as a person and as a U.S. patriot. I'm also left feeling very apprehensive in anticipation of some future documentary about our involvement in the Mideast. God help us.

Steven Tingley  10/06/2010 12:06 AM

Since its inception, our country has aimed for the highest democratic ideals in history. There have certainly been bumps, including hypocrisies and atrocities, along the way. However, our best ideas and ideals have always sprung from men and women of honor and conscientiousness. People who believe our country can be the best, not measured simply in dollars, but in truth, justice, equality, liberty, and of course, the pursuit of happiness. Daniel Ellsberg is one of these Americans, whether you like it or not, because he alone spoke up for all of us who believe that our country has INTEGRITY, that we treat others how we wish to be treated, and making sure that we live by our ideals, not by lying and deceiving the public in order to cover up our government's immoral and unlawful actions. Thank you P.O.V., the filmmakers and Mr. Ellsberg for enlightening us about the importance of being informed, and involved, in the direction and future of this great country.

Steve in MD  10/06/2010 12:07 AM

I wonder if any of the people who oppose Elsberg here realize that during the 1950's, after Dien Bien Phu, Ho chi Minh sent letters to Eisenhower and maybe Kennedy and Johnson - at least 8 times. He wanted help putting his country back together. And yes I realize that Minh was not an angel
But Vietnam was really about western / french colonialization to steal the resources of Indochina for France, and yes the west. Which if you look at maps from the 1950s of Africa, and SE Asia, all had the names of countries, and under them the name of a European colonial power.

If we had been smart about Vietnam, it would have been another Yugoslavia. Communist yes, but friendly to the west, and an important window on the communist world especially the Chinese.

But we were dumb. France had done to Indochina something similar to what Japan did re entering WWII. Japan called it the southeast Asia co-prosperity sphere. Actually an excuse to mass murder and steal the rice, tin, rubber, and I forget the other natural resources they thought they needed. An economic war.

In the end, let's look at what we did -

A million Vietnamese killed. 58000 Americans dead, and probably 250,000 still suffering from their wounds.

All to continue the subjugation of Vietnam for economic reasons, and as the movie said to save our face mostly when the war was obviously unwinnable. Which most insurgencies are.

Now, that we've come to our senses, we give Vietnam most favored trading status, diplomatic recognition, etc. And they are not even on the map as a problem for us. In fact there is a large tourism business there from westerners including Americans.

We were dumb dumber and dumbest in going to war there, which btw was also to prop up a south Vietnamese govt that was just as corrupt as the north, if not more so.

Daniel Ellsberg was a hero - for all the Americans, and Vietnamese who didn't die there in a continuation of the war.

And you can bet the people most opposed to Ellsberg now are the same people who didn't learn the lesson of the catastrophe of Iraq. which turned a nation beginning to reform after their own madman Khomeni died, into a near nuclear power. Because when we invaded Iraq, it drove the reformists in Iran out of power.

And the price of Iraq has yet to be written. It could well be a terrorist nuclear bomb from Iran exploding anywhere in the west.
The legacy of our again - lust for in this case control of Iraq's oil. For the profits of the oil business. Of which Bush and Cheney's wealth comes from. Bush family, in the oil business billionaires, Cheney with Halliburton - both an oil services company and the mfr of armored vehicles from the govt.

Eisenhower had it right, even if he didn't listen to his own advice - Beware of the military - industrial complex (and their lust for money - the source of all evil.

And now we have the big industrialists and businesses funding the republican party. Wonder what war they will give us next - the current one is the war on the middle class, exemplified by the wall street bg bank meltdown.

And through all of this, let's not forget that our mission in Afghanistan was not to fix the country. It was to kill bin laden and his gang. Which we could have done when we had him trapped in the tora bora mountains in 2002.

If we hadn't been too busy preparing the invasion of Iraq.

And so it goes. Think of Iran with nucs, and bin laden still alive. after 9 years. And what that final chapter could become.

The end of civilization as we know it.

Because if you look at it, it's all about big big money and greed.

And we know who represents those people in this country.

Manny Luoff 10/06/2010 12:11 AM

Perhaps some of those in government now will find the courage to speak out, emboldened by this fascinating documentary.

Steve in MD 10/06/2010 12:13 AM

Below is a key error I made above, corrected.
"And you can bet the people most opposed to Ellsberg now, are the same people who didn't learn the lesson of the catastrophe of Iraq, which RESULTED IN IRAN, a nation beginning to reform after their own madman Khomeni died, into a near nuclear power. Because when we invaded Iraq, it drove the reformists in Iran out of power."

**Gregory A. Hempfling** 10/06/2010 12:30 AM

Did you notice how happy the people in this "production" were to make villains of anyone who wanted to defeat the Communists attempting to conquer South Vietnam? Do you know what Communism is? Was there any criticism of Communism? Did you notice how the overall message of this "production" was that the American press, with people like Daniel as their alias, will do whatever it takes, including reveling confidential government documents, to bring down an administration that they do not agree with politically? Have things really changed that much since then? Think about it! Why was his attitude and reaction during the the JFK Presidency so different than his attitude and reaction during the President Richard Nixon Presidency? Do you know what political partisanship is? Do you recall what Daniel Ellsberg, the "apparent" outspoken anti-war, and humanitarian America was doing or saying about the brutal bombings of the Democrat President Bill Clinton in 2000 of legitimate pharmaceutical plants in Kenya and Tanzania that killed hundreds of innocent hard working civilians? Did you notice that in this "production", there was no mention of the atrocities committed by the Communists that had invaded a sovereign country? By the way, what ever happened to all of those "anti-war protests"? Are we not still at war? Oh, wait...what is the political party in the White House right now? How active is the "main stream" press to scrutinize or question this administration? Doesn't it make YOU wonder? All of these questions?

Watch it again with fresh, untainted eyes!

Peace!

Out!

**Edward J. Dodson** 10/06/2010 12:31 AM

Daniel Ellsberg provides an important and sobering example of how tenuous is the commitment of our political and military leaders to the principles of participatory democracy. Richard Nixon was forced to resign the Presidency; based on the evidence, he should have been convicted of crimes against humanity. And, of course, Nixon was far from alone in a long list of people who abused their positions of responsibility and authority by committing or authorizing terrible crimes. As historians uncover more and more of the facts and details of the actions of our past
leaders, it is clear that the ideal of America as defender of liberty and democracy has been more of a public relations story than reality. How can any truly thoughtful person not be cynical and distrust anything our government officials want us to believe?

The post-Second World War generation was sold a strategy of knee-jerk anti-communism used to defend any despotic government that declared itself against communism. Even then, the underlying influences were corporate -- resource extraction, preventing unionization of impoverished workers, unimpeded destruction of ecosystems -- and monopolistic.

Not much has changed that I can discern!

Jeffrey Sykes 10/06/2010 12:37 AM

This was a great documentary and so full of meaning for today's conflicts and tension between national security and civilian control of the government.

Thank you Mr. Ellsberg for being willing to lay it all on the line. That's what a patriot does, isn't it folks?

Gail Wilson 10/06/2010 12:39 AM

Outstanding. Hope watchers don't get so into the drama of the story they miss the lessons to be learned.

S Seay 10/06/2010 12:46 AM

Finally! I have found a hero! He is noble man, who makes me have faith.

Gregory A. Hempfing 10/06/2010 12:52 AM

Dear Steve (long retired "historian" in Baltimore, MD),

We appreciate the correction that you posted. After reading your previous post, we are waiting for several more (including all of your grammatical errors).
Peace Out!

Shame on him....for telling half-truths without accepting his own responsibility.

He projects himself as a martyr, in fact he has a larger culpability than he will ever admit. He knows that the government can't acknowledge his "story".....must be nice
to tell a one sided tale. He mixes truth with his own version of events, and he knows
he won't be challenged....how much money is he making?

Hoping to see this for myself, didn't know it was on until it had already showed so I
hope it will replay...Can anyone tell me if they know if it will be shown again?

Just a reply to something I read from Retired Historian...you stated " And now we
have the big industrialists and businesses funding the republican party. Wonder
what war they will give us next - the current one is the war on the middle class,
exemplified by the wall street bg bank meltdown." I'm not sure if you were stating
that the wall street big bank meltdown is due to the republican party or not, it doesn't
seem clear but if so, I would beg to differ. I believe that both parties are to blame and
the democratic party moreso. First of all, the Democratic party receives more
donations from the Wall Street Elite than the Republican party, everyone knows that.
It's been highly publicized. In the 2008 election, they received 40% more in
donations, they've been at the helm every time there's been a bailout to be given &
we, the taxpayers get to foot the bill & they are all too willing to sign our names to
that check. Obama's biggest donor was Goldman Sachs & his 6th & 7th largest
donors, respectively were Citigroup & JPMorgan Chase. Before you get all itchy to
get nasty about the Repubs, hold your horses I don't have a lot nice to say about
them, either. They're all too willing to spend our money with their friends, in the
name of stimulating the economy & while their brand of spending makes far more
sense & tends to work some of the time, still there's that nasty little thing about
cronyism I can't stand! So, in my opinion, the whole 2 party system needs to go, we
need to bring in Independents & get out all these lifers & stop the career politicians!

We of course know that our government habitually lies to us (the public), in fact, we
routinely make jokes, and shake our heads saying "What can we do about it?" Dr.
Ellsberg did do something, he risked his liberty to speak out against something that he knew was wrong. We can all learn from his example. "For the people and by the people" is not a joke!

Our government has been out of hand for years. Hopefully, with the help of great programs like this one. More people will give a critical look at the "liberties" that the federal government takes with our constitution. This is a serious problem that has to be curtailed. The Constitution is the basis of why our country is (was?) great. We should all be guardians of the ideals that this document represents. As was Dr. Ellsberg, a true American!

**Gregory A. Hempfling**  10/06/2010 01:28 AM

Let me be the first to agree with all of you conspiracy theorists. Like you, I am not trusting of our corrupt Federal (and State for that matter) government. They are up to NO GOOD! Especially the current administration. And it doesn't help that PBS gets money (our money) from the government in the form of funding. However, I'm sure that it doesn't have ANY impact on Anything.

Peace Out!

**Dan P**  10/06/2010 01:33 AM

Best documentary I've seen yet. Great job guys!

**JCummings**  10/06/2010 01:45 AM

Outstanding! Thank you.

Wish there was more of this so my grand children can get some real values instead of the other nonsense on TV!

Bravo, bravo

**Gregory A. Hempfling**  10/06/2010 01:46 AM

Best documentary I've seen yet. Great job guys. Of course, this is the first documentary that I have ever seen! I hope that it gets better!
Peace Out

Mike Smith  10/06/2010 01:52 AM

A great segment of our country's young history that should be required viewing by our young people in high schools across the country. Outstanding!

Gregory A. Hempfling  10/06/2010 01:58 AM

Focus People!

Peace Out!

Bill Martin  10/06/2010 01:59 AM

During the documentary Dr. Ellsberg mentioned E.M. Forster's quote: "If given the choice of betraying my country or my friend, I hope that I would betray my country."

What Forster meant by "country" was government, and what he meant by "friend" was his fellow man, i.e. the people that governments rule over and victimize.

As for the word "betray," I am certain that Forster meant "expose" as a pack of murderers, thieves, and liars.

Dr. Ellsberg did very well to "betray" our country which has been ruled for decades by such scoundrels.

Bravo, Dan!

Keith Rodgers  10/06/2010 02:08 AM

This goes to Mike from Chicago, IL

Why don't you go to YouTube and watch the (Fog of War) from Robert McNamara, He describes how the whole Viet Nam war was a Hoax. It would figure since ALL Political MEN in Your Town have Diseased Brains that you would think of WINNING a War in which killed 3,000,000 Asians. Perhaps you should watch some of John Pilgers documentary's on Viet Nam and see what NAPALM does to a burning child's body Or what part of Charlie Company did in the Slaughter of over 300-500 Civilians mainly Women and Children.

http://www.pbs.org/pov/mostdangerousman/
These are all HUMANS that had no part in the War and remember it was a HOAX to begin with. Then think of Pre-War 1991) Iraq while Sanctions were in place and the US Bombed the entire Civilian Food supply of Iraq. (A WAR CRIME) Then think of After 9/11 in which the CIA and BUSH admitted IRAQ had No Ties to Al-Queada No WMD'S But years before the US, England and OTHERS had Sold Iraq the Bio-Weapons it claimed it had. Yet the US went in and killed yet another 1,000,000 HUMANS.

I sure hope YOU don't call yourself a CHRISTIAN? You are NOT!

If you can read this here > http://www.dhushara.com/book/death/clark.htm
We Need More Accountability.

In WWII when the Allied Troops rolled into Germany and saw what was being done at the Camp's, They went into the Towns and brought the German People out to let them WITNESS what their Government had been doing. They were FORCED to help bury the tens of thousands of dead. NOW IT IS OUR TURN. We are being lead before the Nations for the War Crimes Our Government has done. The 9/11 Cover-up's and the List goes on.

Remember Hitler said, "When you tell a Lie. "TELL A BIG LIE" The People will think it is so out of this world that it is UNBELIEVABLE. Or Will WE?

Yes we loose Soldiers. But like Colin Powell said, He was Not counting the Iraqi War Dead. In Viet Nam we counted every MIA we had. Yet in Iraq they Buried them with Bulldozers by the Hundreds or Thousands along the Highway of Death.

It is no wonder Haiti has not received any Aide from the USA. We have become a Nation of Killers not Savers like before. History will Prove this and it is not my Words it is this Nations Actions.

While we are spent to the Hilt now our Government is giving FREE OBAMA-PHONES out for those on Welfare. More Debt. More War. and More DEATH.

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Gregory A. Hempfling 10/06/2010 02:10 AM

Question...did anybody making comments on this site, "other than me", actually watch the "program" in question?

Please answer quickly...I am curious, but I have a job, I don't rely on public assistance and need to get up to pay your...sorry, MY taxes.

Peace Out

Sorry about the smartelick attitude, it's how I roll
Peace Out Again!

The Pentagon Papers were classified Top Secret, not to keep vital information hidden from our enemies, but to keep the government's lies and crimes hidden from the American people. And it's still going on today.

Thank you Daniel Ellsberg. You risked your freedom to save the lives of innocents. For that you a true hero of the highest order!

Old Uncle Dave

10/06/2010 02:12 AM

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Gregory A. Hempfling

10/06/2010 02:23 AM

Old Uncle Dave,

I realize that you are not my real uncle, but can I get a Christmas present this year anyway?

Thanks,

Love,

Peace Out

Gregory A. Hempfling

10/06/2010 02:48 AM

O.K.

Seriously! Either you all agree with me (not likely), or you've all gone to bed (more likely), or PBS doesn't want me to be heard (most likely)?

Peace and Love
Like

**Gregory A. Hempfling** 10/06/2010 02:59 AM

Daniel what's his name...Hero?

Daniel what's his name...Snitch?

Daniel what's his name...Traitor?

Daniel what's his name...Rat?

Peace and Love OUT cowards!

Like

**Sandra McDonald** 10/06/2010 03:36 AM

First I have to thank PBS for it's many programs which inform on so many levels. I am so glad you all exist, care and work hard to educate and raise the awareness of those fortunate to have you available. And Yes, I will be more forth coming with my monetary show of appreciation.

The Ellsberg piece was riveting and enlightening to me. I was there protesting, knowing that that I must speak out against the atrocity of this war, the only one I was old enough to witness (17). I don't even remember hearing of him, although I had heard of David Harris, because I was a big fan of Joan Baez. Although I was never clear about why he went to jail. I vaguely remember hearing the term "Pentagon Papers" with out knowing what they were. I didn't watch T.V. during that period of my life. I was too busy hitchhiking around, exploring the world and developing my life experience. I was so impressed with the documentary, what it exposed me to that I had not been aware of. I have a new "old" hero. And what about the young protester who show Dan the beautiful example that split him apart with his sacrifice, he is an unsung hero. And what about our soldiers swallowing the lies, doing the actual bloodletting and risking and dying. Those innocent and unaware, are they any less a "hero"?

Like

**ibsteve2u** 10/06/2010 04:43 AM

http://www.pbs.org/pov/mostdangerousman/
Mr. Ellsberg did have a lasting impact. He taught America's right two key tactics:

1) Control of the Supreme Court is critical

2) Any truth the press reports can be drowned out with enough propaganda - particularly since political advertising and "the news" no longer appear to be restricted to the realm of truth

I believe Mr. Ellsberg did the right thing (albeit with the caveat that, having had a potful of security clearances "beyond top secret" myself, I don't know if I would or could have done it).

Unfortunately, I would conclude that his journey into truth may have contributed to America's right's decision to play even dirtier - which is not attributing blame in any way, shape, or form.

Rather, I would say that Mr. Ellsberg forced the malignant among our citizens into the light for a moment, and they didn't like it...and so now they seek to redefine democracy in America to better...shade them.

Susanna Tyagi  10/06/2010 05:55 AM

This program opened my eyes to never trust my government. We all know the war in Afghanistan is wrong so why are we still over there?

ATF  10/06/2010 08:56 AM

A top notch and riveting story about the lies perpetuated by those rationalizing the U.S.military involvement around the world. Another explanation of Eisenhower's "Why We Fight". It certainly begs the same questions regarding our modern day Vietnam.

Mark Goretsky  10/06/2010 10:06 AM

Courageous people like Daniel Ellsberg expose to people the true terrible face of US presidents and politicians. As Linda S. Heard aptly put it: "The gleaming smiles of American leaders, who have perfected the art of appearing as benign, dog-loving family men, sometimes hide dark secrets along with a ruthlessness normally associated with brutal third-world dictators." With the screening of "The most dangerous..." PBS for the first time has recognized its public role. Thank you.
Like

Robert Landry  10/06/2010 10:33 AM

Amazing how wing nuts have so much time to spend in criticism of details of grammar, taxes, calling non-murderous people cowards, and generally ranting. People like this were frequently heard saying "I was only following orders" in Nuremberg. Yes of course we need no taxes, or central government, and all military actions of the U.S. Are to the benefit of man kind. Surely he has personal air transport so no need for roads or other wastes of his tax dollars. Dude this is the way I roll.

Like

Roger  10/06/2010 11:58 AM

I was only a little kid when this all went down. This was a very well done documentary and the whole time I watched I kept thinking about the Bush invasion of Iraq and how that mess is all based on a bunch of lies as well.

Like

Gale Jackson  10/06/2010 12:43 PM

This documentary I watched last night merely confirmed what I already suspected. It also explains why we could win a World War (II) that was prompted by genuine action in a few years, but take nearly a decade to struggle in a much less significant war geographically in the middle east (Iran/Afghanistan) and Vietnam. America will pay the price and there are consequences when the powerful throw their weight around. (for example, we paid the price for Slavery by having to endure the Civil War). Right now I am suspecting that we are much less safe because of the barbaric conditions we have created in this war we are in now, because the inhabitants will become even more radical as a result. The reasons why war is declared that seem apparent don't make any sense to me? To save face and show prowess? I am beginning to see who the real barbarians and savages are. However, the proof of who our leaders really are and how ignorant the powerful can be is in the Nixon tapes. We had a tyrant in the white house and didn't know it until he was exposed by the true civilian leaders. However, the blessed thing about America is that we have a constitution in place that give us a frame work to evoke courage for what it says we are entitled to. Without a constitution and separation of Powers Ellsberg would have been murdered.

Like

Mr H  10/06/2010 01:20 PM

One of the best documentaries I've seen on PBS in awhile. Thats not a slam on PBS, just kudos for the makers and to Mr Ellsberg for doing what was right instead of what was convenient.
In 1971, I was 21 years old and devastated by the Vietnam conflict. Friends returned broken shells of their former selves. Years later many would die of cancers related to agent orange exposure or need medication to fight the demons in their mind. Whether or not our government did the right thing by sending troops to Vietnam will continue to be debated. Nearly all young people acted upon the dictates of their conscious by: fighting a “war”, fleeing to Canada, demonstrating, becoming nurses and counselors to help the returning wounded, and folks like Daniel Ellsberg who exposed the truth. Bravo to all.

I'm truly amazed after everything that has happened in our country since January 17, 1961 when Eisenhower gave his farewell speech which I highly recommend to watch, a president on Nov. 22, 1963 and his brother running for president June 5, 1968 were both assassinated and then a civil rights leader is assassinated April 4, 1968 all three were assassinated in front of thousands of people both live and on T.V. it has to make one wonder. In 1980 the Savings & Loans go out of business leaving the Credit Card side of the industry to move their corporate headquarters to South Dakota & Delaware where there is no banking regulations under the Marquette Act it make one wonder. Even more bizarre is 911 & almost at the same time the spread of Amthrax and all the speculation. And then the Gulf War in 1991 & 2003. It all makes one wonder who is running the show in the backround. WE NEED CHANGE & TRANSPARENCY.

Some posting here have referred to the posters and/or Dr. Ellsberg as cowards. In hopes of educating I point out that not only was Dr. Ellsberg a marine rifle company commander, but voluntarily spent more than a year on the ground in Nam often participating in double daylight patrols followed by a night patrol. He was under fire on many occasions and took point voluntarily. This experience combined with the insider information he encountered over years with the SOD offices and the Rand Corporation formed his convictions regarding the murderous, misguided military activity in Vietnam. He was and remains a hero. Cowards sit in offices in DC directing the obscene breech of trust that employs our forces in unnecessary and immoral conflict.

*sighs*
Not available for view in Canada

*sighs again*

BevAnn 10/06/2010 09:43 PM

*sighs*

Not available for view in Canada

*sighs again*

Alan Moore 10/06/2010 11:39 PM

PBS and POV are to be commended for broadcasting this important and thought provoking documentary. Those who never have walked in the shoes that Dr. Ellsberg walked cannot imagine the anguish that one faces in making the choice to out information on a wrong so deep yet so fundamental to the institutions that they are devoted too. Some years ago my friends and I faced a similar dilemma... whether to release a secret document that we had come upon that reviewed the U.S. role in the Kwangju massacre in South Korea (for those not familiar with this, troops under U.S. command were released to quell a democracy uprising against the military dictatorship governing South Korea in 1980, resulting in 1000-2000 deaths of civilians). We decided against releasing the information, not because we thought it wrong to do so, but because of fear. Thankfully that same information has now long been out and justice has been done. The truth always comes out, sometimes because of the courage of individuals such as Dr. Ellsberg, sometimes due to the struggle of thousands or millions and sometimes just because that is how history progresses. This documentary is valuable for many reasons, but chief among them for me was how it showed the thought process of someone who faced up to a clash of values and figured out what the moral course of actions was.... and then had the courage to take that path.

Jeanne Gerber 10/07/2010 08:26 AM

No mention was made of the involvement of Beacon Press in Boston and their involvement of printing the Pentagon Papers.
Thanks for an excellent job of putting Daniel Ellsberg and The Pentagon Papers into perspective.

James 10/07/2010 10:12 AM

It would be nice if this film didn't try to play favorites, its too bad; it had some very good parts. I didn't like Nixon's words out of context, and the fact is that Ellsberg should have done some jail time for releasing those papers and the film was poor in suggesting that Nixon's resignation had anything to do with America's withdrawal from Vietnam. Vietnam was definitely winnable, except that the politicians failed. The film failed to mention how many Vietnamese died after the democratic congress cowardly refused to send monetary aid promised to the south Vietnamese. Hopefully all those who viewed this have a true understanding of what happened in Vietnam. Ellsberg's dilemma although compassionate, seemed through his deeds more about himself than anyone else. I wonder what he's been doing all these years since then?

Laine Seaton 10/07/2010 10:17 AM

I caught this program just by chance late the other night, and now I feel so lucky not to have missed it. What an incredible program and story. To understand more now the history of the US with Vietnam and of our true intent in continuing the war, for 10 years, is life changing. One of the most incredible parts of the story was that the public voted Nixon in for a second term - even after learning of the Pentagon Papers. It finally took Watergate to boot him out. I was born in '68 so was too young while this was happening, but now I can appreciate the magnitude of these events.

I think little Ben Quayle needs to see this film before declaring that 'Barack Obama is the worst president in history.' Excellent job to the film makers, and Mr. Ellsberg, this country owes you it's deepest gratitude for your bravery. It's beyond words.

Susan Wayo 10/08/2010 11:25 AM

The story of Daniel Ellsberg's courage is both uplifting and depressing - uplifting because of his courage he has demonstrated and the results he achieved, depressing because it is clear to me that, as a nation, we have not taken the lessons the Papers and their impact should have taught us.

I was anticipating graduation from college the year the Pentagon Papers were leaked. I was a graduate student studying abroad when the Watergate scandal broke. One of the things that stunned me in watching this documentary is just how little I knew about the implications of these papers, and sadly, how little I cared at that time!
But most stunning of all: At one point in the piece, the narrative essentially goes something like this: What may have disturb Dr. Ellsberg most is that the public might finally read and understand the contents of the report -- and then ignore it.

Sadly, that's exactly what has happened -- again. The egregious actions of the Bush administration are case and point. And now, as we approach this next election, it appears Americans are once again failing to understand and pay attention to what has happened in our government and in the halls of those who determine our political, financial, and military strategies.

I'm afraid we have become a nation where money eclipses ethics, where poorly educated citizens confuse correlation with causation, and where people vote (or don't) based on gut and sound bites rather than knowledge and thoughtful choices.

We need more people like Dr. Ellsberg and his wife. We need more people who live by ethics that protect people over political or financial interests. We need more newspapers that can invest sufficiently in ethical investigative journalism.

And we need a Supreme Court that protects individuals and personal rights rather than affirming the rights of organization that can work anonymously behind closed doors to protect their interests and further erode our ability as a nation to value and protect freedom of speech and "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness" - for Americans and indeed for people around the world.

Michelle Keefe 10/08/2010 07:58 PM

Wow. Just wow. This should be required viewing for every American.

Thank you to the filmmakers, to PBS, and most importantly, to Daniel Ellsberg. If only there were more like him today.

Nancy Fradkin 10/08/2010 10:12 PM

(I posted recently, but it hasn't shown up, so I will try again).

I was inspired. I was shaken, especially by the use of clips from Nixon's tapes. I have changed my mind a bit about Henry Kissinger as listened to him respond to Nixon's push to bomb dikes resulting in 200,000 deaths or drop an atomic bomb. But mostly I finally learned the back story of a man who struggled with moral and political
change, took great risks, to expose decades of lies about Vietnam by our presidents. The filmmakers have done an incredible job of weaving together a massive amount of diverse sources into an emotionally and intellectually and politically intense drama that speaks to us today.

I lived through 11 horrifying months of my husband being a medic in Vietnam. Now I face waiting for a nephew to do the same as a Marine in Afghanistan.

I cried with great gratitude as I watched Mr. Ellsberg allow himself to be arrested again. Keep speaking truth, Dan. I hope to march again, too. I will certainly continue to speak out against the wars.

Robert Landry 10/09/2010 12:20 AM

I have frequently heard that we could have "won" the conflict in Vietnam if the force commanders had been allowed to prosecute the war. How many more millions of Vietnamese and thousands of our troupe would we have to slaughter? And we would have "won" what? A lull in the civil conflict perhaps. Would we have saved our nation from invasion and oppression by the Vietnamese? No, we had no real rationale to be fighting there. There was nothing to win. The last years were fought only in an attempt to save face. Now that face is reflected back to us through the grey names chiseled in that wall in D.C.

Tacey 10/11/2010 04:24 AM

Thank you for your principles and most of all your courage.

Charles 10/12/2010 09:19 PM

What a great absorbing first person account of a crucial moment in history by the central protagonist Mr. Daniel Ellsberg.

Though in comparison to Nixon, Kissinger appears to show restraint in the use of force against the Vietnamese, perhaps he should give his Nobel Prize to Daniel Ellsberg or at least the Nobel Committee should give a belated one to him.

There are many parallels between the truth telling (or lies telling) in Vietnam and Iraq/Afghanistan, but as Mr. Ellsberg points out, nobody has yet truly blown the whistle on today's wars. I'm half way through Bob Woodward's "Obama's Wars" and it appears that the Obama has accepted Bush's premises of the wars without question. Bush II?
The documentary explains the reason why president after president stuck with Vietnam as their desire not to appear to "lose Vietnam on their watch". I don't understand this and perhaps the film makers could explore this explanation further.

Finally, Fox News won a court case in which they won the right to fabricate news stories. When news outlets can now use fiction as news, I'm not sure today's courts will respect them as much as they did during Mr. Ellsberg's time. So much for press privileges.

And by the way, I think the Vietnamese really couldn't care much about communism. The most important thing for them was claiming their independence from the French colonial masters. Too bad we sided with the French. The Vietnamese ended up seeking help from the commies. Got to hand it to them. They were willing to lose 2 million to gain their independence.

Anyway thank you.

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**John Lundin** 10/21/2010 10:39 AM

...a sad episode in our nation's history... and regrettable that there was little, credible counterpoint either in the presentation or the discussion. What is the actionable information from the documentary or the panel?

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**Art Toegemann** 10/23/2010 10:59 PM

In summary: the suppression of Johnson's August 4, 1964 Address to the Nation is contemporary Vietnam war propaganda. See it, experience it, suffer it first hand.

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**Charlotte** 10/27/2010 09:09 PM

I was a teenager in the DC suburbs during this era and later would stand outside the White House to listen to President Ford being sworn in on that August day in 1974. After all these years, this story speaks to me, not just on a national level, but on the more mundane level of the work world, where I have watched people take the path of least resistance, denying the truth of their actions and motivations, and never pausing to count the cost. Unfortunately, the usual path is the more common story. With Daniel Ellsberg, we see that taking the path "less traveled by" is a personal struggle, taken with great difficulty, and often ending in dire consequences for those who choose it. Let us celebrate those, at any level, who have the integrity and
personal courage to name the lie and turn towards the truth. We all reap the benefit of their decisiveness. Thank you.

Andra Higgs 12/01/2010 01:03 PM

There was an interesting interview with Daniel Ellsberg following this broadcast and he was asked about leaking the Pentagon Papers in relation to the current WikiLeaks. It was interesting to see him respond and say that the impact of the Pentagon Papers was, perhaps, more impactful, though he considered the WikiLeaks matter to have a far-more global impact (in terms of reaching audiences and affecting governments through the power of the Internet). He made the comparison to the millions of pages of WikiLeaks to the 7,000 pages leaked with the Pentagon Papers. Ellsberg noted that all 7,000 pages were copied (one at a time) and a photocopy machine. Image how long that'd take with this current round of Wiki documents? The flop side of the matter, though, was I wish the interviewer had asked for Ellsberg's impressions on on the Wiki founder have an Interpol warrant issued for his arrest. . .

FayNissenbaum Today 02:20 AM

I am watching this broadcast now awestruck by its quality! Just as Elsberg gave the pentagon papers to first the NYTimes and then distributed them to another paper after another --- POV - this website --- should publish the full transcript to this program and make it available online for viewing. This is too important to limit - too educational to hold back.
WikiLeaks olayı ABD'de daha önce de yaşanmıştı. Daniel Elsberg'in belgeseli:
http://www.pbs.org/pov/mostdangerousman/index.php