

The Most Dangerous Man in America

The Most Dangerous Man in America is a documentary about Daniel Ellsberg and the release of the Pentagon Papers. The film covers Ellsberg's life, the early 1970s crisis centered around Ellsberg's decision to release the top secret documents, and the Supreme Court decision that shaped modern free press in the United States.

Run Time: 92 Minutes

Release Date: 2009

Not Rated

Cast:

Daniel Ellsberg, Pentagon Analyst

Tony Russo, Pentagon Analyst

Tom Oliphant, *Boston Globe*

Howard Zinn, History Professor

President Lyndon Johnson (1963—1969)

President Richard Nixon (1969-1974)

Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara (1961-1968)

John Dean, Legal Counsel to President Nixon

Senator Mike Gravel, D-Alaska

Leonard Wineglass, Defense Attorney

Questions:

1. How did Daniel Ellsberg describe the beginnings of the Vietnam Conflict?
2. What was unique about the Gulf of Tonkin incident?
3. What was the "McNamara Study," when was it commissioned, and what conclusions did it draw?
4. Describe the relationship of the U.S. government and the press covering the Vietnam conflict.
5. What did Ellsberg go through before leaking the Pentagon Papers to the media?
6. Why did he release the documents to so many newspapers?
7. What did the *New York Times* have to consider before printing these documents?
8. How did President Nixon and his Justice Department react when it learned the *New York Times* possessed these top secret documents?
9. Should Dan Ellsberg have gone to jail?
10. How did the criminal trial (*United States v. Daniel Ellsberg and Tony Russo*) differ from the Supreme Court case (*New York Times v. United States*)?
11. What was the Supreme Court's ruling, and do you feel it was the correct one?
12. What impact did the decision have on the role of the press in America?