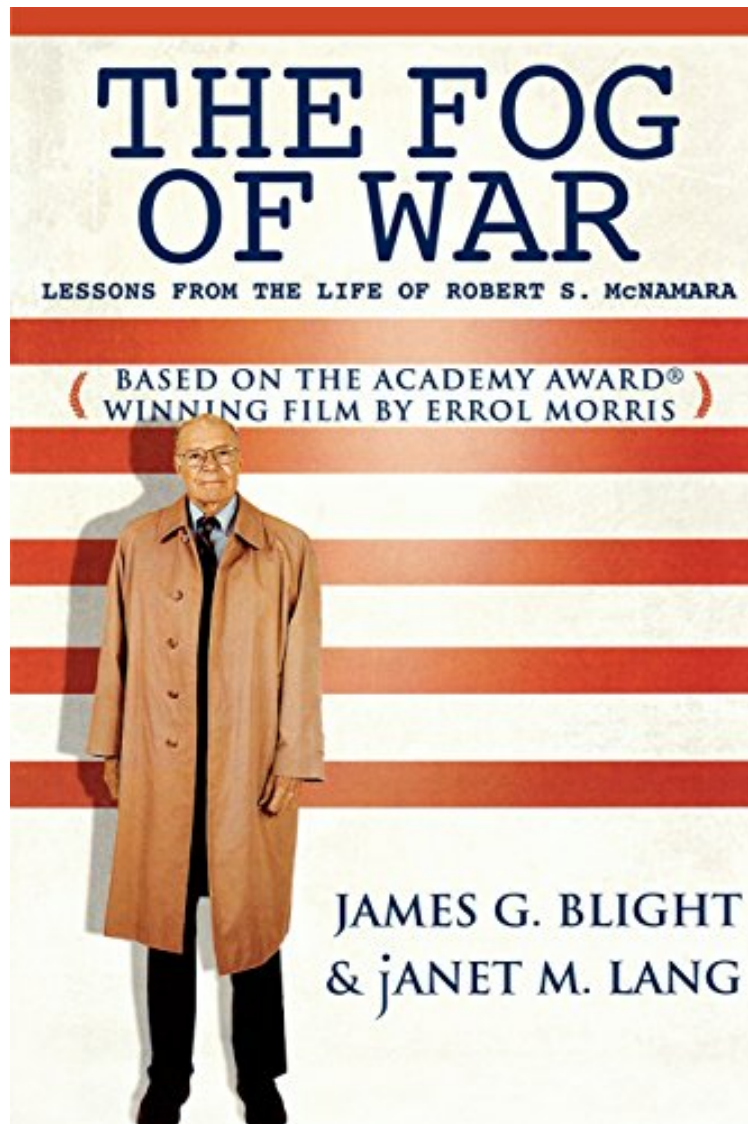


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James G. Blight, Janet M. Lang
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James G. Blight, Janet M. Lang : The Fog of War: Lessons from the Life of Robert S. McNamara before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Fog of War: Lessons from the Life of Robert S. McNamara:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. It's a very important record of a dramatic time in recent world History. By Nilo Dagoberto Meleu Gomes Choose this rating cause the book unveils many things about Viet Nam war and the Cuban missile Crisis that were unknown. The way the matters are shown are very interesting. Can't be any

better. I recommend to people involved in History. To people who are involved in Politics and in studying the wars throughout the world. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Betsy A book for all of time 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. When will we learn. By Al in MBK This book makes one wonder how we never learn from mistakes. Why didn't Rumsfeld read these comments before we got into this terrible situation in Iraq.

Robert S. McNamara is one of modern America's most controversial figures. His opinions, policies, and actions have led to a firestorm of debate, ignited most recently by Errol Morris's Academy Award-winning film, *The Fog of War*. In the companion book, editors James G. Blight and Janet M. Lang use lessons from McNamara's life to examine issues of war and peace in the 20th century. McNamara's career spans some of America's defining events from the end of World War I, through the course of World War II, and the unfolding of the Cold War in Cuba, Vietnam, and around the world. *The Fog of War* brings together film transcripts, documents, dialogues, and essays to explore what the horrors and triumphs of the 20th century can teach us about the future.

From Publishers Weekly When Robert Strange McNamara ran the Vietnam War as secretary of defense from 1961 to 1968, he let it be known that he had all the answers, and that those who didn't agree with him were not as smart nor as well informed as he was. After being forced to resign in 1968, McNamara refused to discuss the Vietnam War until his book, *In Retrospect*, was published in 1995. In that controversial apologia, he allowed that he "made mistakes" in Vietnam, but stressed that every other top official in Washington did as well and that he based his policies on incorrect information supplied by the military. McNamara (b. 1916) conveyed that same message in Errol Morris's Oscar-winning 2003 documentary *The Fog of War*. Brown University political scientists Blight and Lang reread McNamara's testimony in the documentary and add other archival material to look primarily at the big decisions of WW II (in which McNamara served) and the Vietnam War. The authors are not dispassionate observers. They present what amounts to a glowing assessment of McNamara and the Errol Morris film, for which they served as advisers. They speak of McNamara's "passionate concern for the human future" and his "hard work and courage." They refer to the Morris film as "an artistic triumph" and "a brilliant work of art." The authors pay lip service to McNamara's many critics from across the political spectrum, but the book feels most like strategic support for McNamara's mea culpa and for military intelligence reform generally. (May) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. Essential reading for anyone interested in drawing lessons from the Vietnam war. (Robert K. Brigham, Vassar College; author of *Guerrilla Diplomacy*) It is difficult to imagine a book more terribly relevant than *The Fog of War*. James Blight and Janet Lang weave together a compelling narrative, important historical documents from the Cuban missile crisis and the Vietnam war, and gripping exchanges of old adversaries met in dialogue in order to offer readers Robert McNamara's darkly prophetic 'lessons.' In so doing, they brilliantly engage the turbulent, complex, endlessly fascinating life of this remarkable public figure. This book is certainly one of the surest guides through the fog, and we would be wise to pay attention. (Edward T. Linenthal, author of *The Unfinished Bombing: Oklahoma City in American Memory*) This book should help teachers and students use Errol Morris's 'The Fog of War' as a launching pad for debating Robert McNamara's lessons about war and peace. (Graham Allison, co-author of *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* and director, Belfer Center for Science and International) Jim Blight and Janet Lang's book is a novel achievement. The documentation, and their enormously helpful commentary, complements the film in an incredibly valuable way. This book should be read by anyone who wants to understand the perilous world we live in. (Paul L. Wachtel, distinguished professor of psychology, City University of New York at City College) This fascinating book is rich with lessons for leaders, citizens and students. It is hard to put down. I hope that more of our leaders will pick it up. (Joseph S. Nye Jr., University Distinguished Service Professor, Harvard University) Robert McNamara is the single most important government official of our times. In the winter of his life, McNamara through the skillful and talented medium of Blight and Lang reflects on his mistakes, the lessons he has drawn from them, his empathy for his enemies, and his willingness to reexamine his own reasoning. And he seeks now to persuade us, passionate as ever that each of us, mighty government officials or ordinary citizen, will be better if we remain skeptical of our certainties. (Jorge I. Domínguez, director of the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard University) Passionately and effectively, Blight and Lang extend McNamara's anti-war lessons by deepening our insight into his life, and with dramatic and revealing documents and oral history dialogues about crises in which he played a leading role: the Cuban missile crisis; the Vietnam war; and the World War II fire- and atomic-bombing of Japan. The result is a classic handbook, at once terrifying and yet hopeful, about how easily the killing can start and what can be done to prevent it. (William Taubman, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning 2004 biography, *Khrushchev*) In his Academy Award-winning film, Errol Morris transformed the popular vision of Robert McNamara from a creator and cold accountant of death and destruction into an agonized, thoughtful, sympathetic public servant. For their part, James Blight and Janet Lang have documented the challenges Robert McNamara faced throughout his seven years as America's Secretary of Defense. They have provided fascinating, often chilling selections from correspondence with and between Kennedy, Khrushchev, Castro, Johnson, and other players during the Cuban missile crisis and the Vietnam War. This previously classified material, together

with thoughtful commentary from scholars and observers, and the helpful views of Blight and Lang, provide a valuable background to the lessons McNamara draws from 'The Fog of War.' Just as Morris's documentary is 'must' seeing for all thoughtful Americans, the Blight/Lang book is 'must' reading. (Chester L. Cooper, former CIA, State Department, and White House specialist on Vietnam, and the author of *The Lost Crusade: America in Vietnam*)