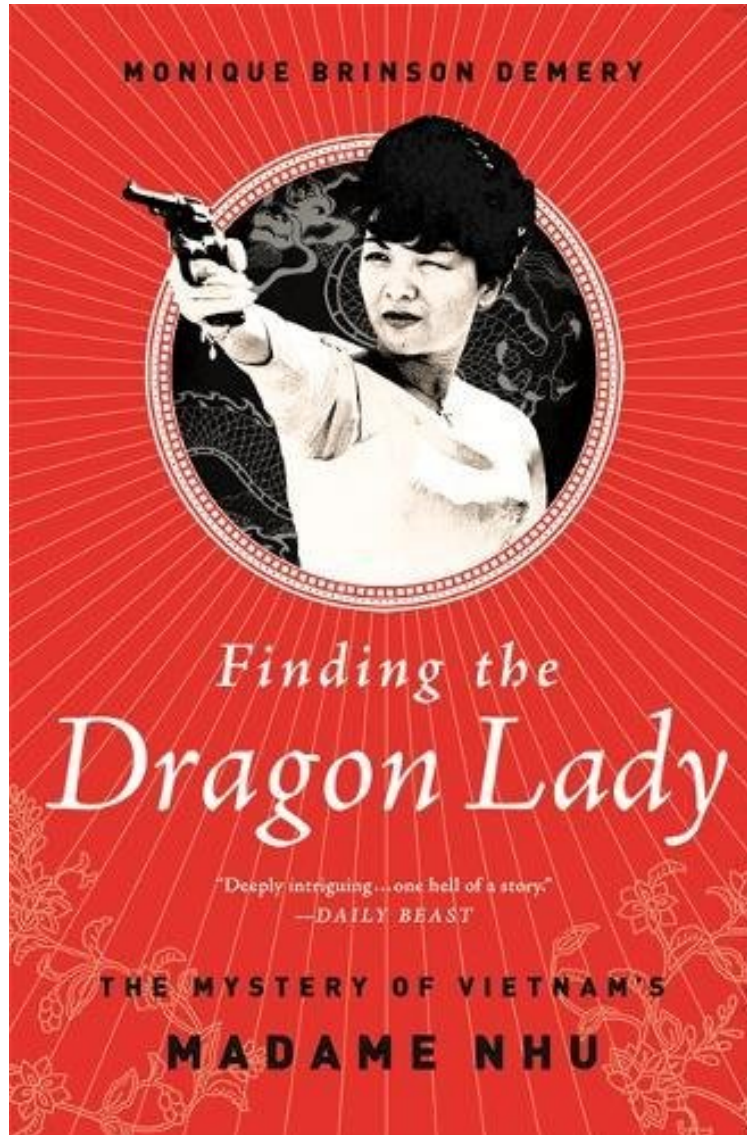


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Finding the Dragon Lady: The Mystery of Vietnam's Madame Nhu

Monique Brinson Demery

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Monique Brinson Demery : Finding the Dragon Lady: The Mystery of Vietnam's Madame Nhu before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Finding the Dragon Lady: The Mystery of Vietnam's Madame Nhu:

9 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Finding the Dragon Lady - Madame NhuBy Amy K.After having just returned from a trip to Vietnam I was completely interested in learning more about this country. Monique Demery gave me just what I needed. It was a captivating book that helped me understand the Vietnam War better (I was a born

during it's infancy) and helped me understand all that Vietnam had been through during the last 100+ years. Even though I had many guides on our stay throughout Vietnam, not one had mentioned the Diem Regime, the Nhu's and especially Madame Nhu. I now can see how uninformed I was about the history over there. My father is a professor who teaches in many cities in Vietnam and he found this book incredibly fascinating as well. It is really, really well written and a page turner -I could not put it down! I would love to see more work by M. Demery.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fear the Dragon!By Cynthia WheelerI thought the book was fascinating as well as quite interesting and informative. Madame Nhu's life was extraordinary. And -- as is the case with many strong-willed, intelligent, and outspoken women -- she was feared and reviled by men in power. Madame Nhu's instincts for survival and her ability to access a situation and react accordingly gave her a distinct advantage in times of distress. This book certainly gave a different perspective regarding Vietnam and American politics. Sadly, it seems that the Vietnamese War could have been prevented if not for the egos and stupidity of government officials.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Review by Marc Phillip YablonkaBy Marc P. YablonkaMonique Brinson Demery's Finding the Dragon Lady: The Mystery of Vietnam's Madame Nhu is the definitive work on one of the key players in America's early involvement in Southeast Asia. If I were Ms. Brinson Demery, as an author and journalist, I'd feel extremely proud to have pinned down such an illusive subject and done such exhaustively thorough research and writing. Her book is extremely informative and just as intriguing as the mysterious Dragon Lady herself. Buy this book!Marc Phillip YablonkaAuthorDistant War: Recollections of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia

In November 1963, the president of South Vietnam and his brother were brutally executed in a coup that was sanctioned and supported by the American government. President Kennedy later explained to his close friend Paul Red Fay that the reason the United States made the fateful decision to get rid of the Ngo's was in no small part because of South Vietnam's first lady, Madame Nhu. That goddamn bitch, Fay remembers President Kennedy saying, She's responsible ... that bitch stuck her nose in and boiled up the whole situation down there. The coup marked the collapse of the Diem government and became the US entry point for a decade-long conflict in Vietnam. Kennedy's death and the atrocities of the ensuing war eclipsed the memory of Madame Nhu with her daunting mixture of fierceness and beauty. But at the time, to David Halberstam, she was the beautiful but diabolic sex dictatress, and Malcolm Browne called her the most dangerous enemy a man can have. By 1987, the once-glamorous celebrity had retreated into exile and seclusion, and remained there until young American Monique Demery tracked her down in Paris thirty years later. Finding the Dragon Lady is Demery's story of her improbable relationship with Madame Nhu, and having ultimately been entrusted with Madame Nhu's unpublished memoirs and her diary from the years leading up to the coup the first full history of the Dragon Lady herself, a woman who was feared and fantasized over in her time, and who singlehandedly frustrated the government of one of the world's superpowers.

From BooklistShe was an enigma, extremely powerful in her heyday but almost forgotten since then: Madame Nhu, wife to the brother of the president of South Vietnam and in practical terms the first lady, a woman small of stature but hugely influential, whose participation in events preceding the 1963 coup that saw her own husband and brother-in-law executed contributed directly to the escalation of the war in Vietnam and to the radical alteration of the American and Vietnamese political and social landscapes. Based on Madame Nhus unpublished memoirs and on personal interviews with the woman known as the Dragon Lady, the book restores Madame Nhu to her proper place in history, as a ruthless and brilliant woman without whose manipulations the war in Vietnam might have turned out very differently. Madame Nhu, who died in 2011, spent more than 40 years (roughly the second half of her life) living far out of the public eye; this frequently surprising book brings its subject back from exile. --David Pitt Chicago Tribune's Printers Row JournalA fascinating portrait of this polarizing figure [a] fair-minded and readable look at Madame Nhu and her prominent role in the early years of the Vietnam WarThis book performs an especially valuable service to readers who want to understand why the U.S. sometimes stumbles in foreign affairs. The book benefits from a firm understanding of Vietnamese traditions. In the end, Demery admits that she ultimately became Madame Nhu's "friend," an admission that makes the reader admire the biographer even more for being so clear-eyed about her subject's flaws. San Francisco ChronicleDemery succeeds in painting such a nuanced picture of this powerful woman that by the time we reach Madame Nhu's 1963 U.S. press tour, we can sympathize with her desire to defend her country Finding the Dragon Lady' is a brave book. Demery realized that I had been handed the chance to breathe some life into the remote, exotic place in history to which she had been assigned,' and she took that opportunity to push beyond the conventional understanding of this painful and polarizing era. It's a testament to her deep knowledge of Vietnamese and American culture that she leaves us wondering what might have been.