



Douglas Brinkley

AUTHOR

American Historian and Best-Selling Author; Presidential Historian, CNN; Katherine Tsanoff Brown Chair in Humanities and Professor of History at Rice University

[VISIT DOUGLAS'S WEBSITE](#)

About:

- **Gender:** Male
- **Nationality:** United States
- **Languages:** English
- **Travels from:** United States

Engagement Types:

- Speaking

Topics:

- Content Marketing
- DEI (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion)
- Future Skills
- Leadership & Management
- Mindfulness & Resilience
- Motivation and Inspiration
- Peak Performance
- People & Culture
- Personal Development

Biography Highlights

- Monumental in his contribution to American culture, Douglas Brinkley takes the historical lessons of the past and applies them to the present and our future.

Biography

Douglas Brinkley is the Katherine Tsanoff Brown Chair in Humanities and Professor of History at Rice University and is on the Board of the National Archives Foundation, The Library of Congress (James Madison Council), and the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library. Additionally, he is the CNN Presidential Historian and a contributing editor at Vanity Fair. He works in many capacities in public history, including museums, colleges, and historical societies. The Chicago Tribune dubbed him "America's New Past Master." The New-York Historical Society has chosen Brinkley as their official U.S. Presidential Historian.

In 2022, he published *Silent Spring Revolution*, which chronicles the rise of environmental activism during the Long Sixties and tells the story of an indomitable generation that saved the natural world under the leadership of John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, and Richard Nixon. Doris Kearns Goodwin praised it as "not only a majestic work of history; it is an urgent call for our time."

Websites:

- [Website](#)

Brinkley's other books include *American Moonshot: John F. Kennedy and the Great Space Race*, a New York Times bestseller, *Cronkite*, which won the Sperber Prize, and *The Great Deluge: Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans, and the Mississippi Gulf Coast*, which received the Robert F. Kennedy Book Award. He has received a Grammy Award for *Presidential Suite* and seven honorary doctorates in American Studies. His two-volume annotated *The Nixon Tapes* won the Arthur S. Link - Warren F. Kuehl Prize.

Brinkley is a board member of the National Archives Foundation, a member of the Council of Foreign Relations, and the James Madison Council of the Library of Congress. He lives in Austin, Texas, with his wife and three children.

Videos



Douglas's Topics

The Business Innovators: Henry Ford to Jeff Bezos

As Dr. Douglas Brinkley points out in his epic book *Wheels for the World: Henry Ford, His Company, and a Century of Progress*, the history of corporations is often neglected. In this revealing presentation, Brinkley highlights the leaders who have constantly pushed for more – as well as the groups of ordinary and extraordinary people surrounding them – and who have, in turn, built America’s greatest companies. He compares his research about Henry Ford, who shaped the 20th century, to the challenges and opportunities faced by Jeff Bezos and other corporate leaders who will shape the 21st century.

Moonshot: John F. Kennedy and Space

Brinkley explores American exceptionalism through the lens of President Kennedy’s call to send humans to the moon, the subject of an upcoming book as well as a 2014 discussion with Neil Armstrong. He describes the motivations behind the moonshot, its impact on both business and government, and similar efforts across industries. Brinkley also offers insight into future opportunities to mobilize resources and motivate people to achieve the seemingly impossible.

Highs and Lows of the American Presidency: Past, Present and Future

As one of America’s leading presidential historians, Brinkley has written books on Ronald Reagan, Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Theodore Roosevelt. In fact, CNN has called him “a man who knows more about the presidency than any human being alive.” Brinkley shares his extensive knowledge of the office of the presidency and the men who have filled it. He paints a rich portrait of the past, offers unparalleled insight into our present, and imparts lessons we should consider for the future.

Race Relations in America: The Past, Present and Future

Brinkley lived through the destruction of Hurricane Katrina with his fellow New Orleans residents. In his book *The Great Deluge*, he shares a complete account of the harrowing week following the flood. His official biography of Rosa Parks captures her personal dignity while conveying the power of her legacy. Brinkley shares highlights from these two amazing stories, provides historical context, and foretells the future of race relations in America.

The U.S. Military: Historical Perspective and Future Needs

At a time when the U.S. military is engaged in its longest, most demanding campaign, our armed forces are stretched thin, but soldier morale remains high. The ongoing commitment of the armed forces – despite the ebbs and flows of politics – is an extraordinary testament to leadership and organizational skill. Brinkley’s voluminous work on a far-reaching range of military campaigns makes him ideally suited to share incredible stories of leadership as well as a general assessment of today’s military and its future.

Testimonials

“

Douglas was a hit. What a great mind he has. His remarks were informative and at times funny. I felt like all the presidents he mentioned were in the room with us. Great speaker!

Universities & Colleges

“

Douglas Brinkley was wonderful! In every respect-he is brilliant and learned and altogether delightful, and all of this was reflected in his talk and Q&A. The audience did not want to let him leave!

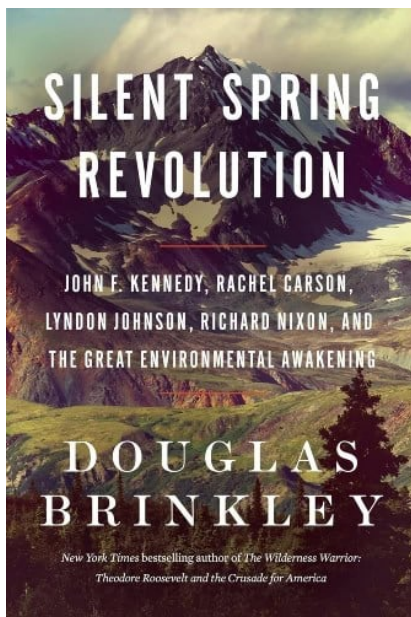
Non-Profit

“

Douglas Brinkley was great. He sketched the story of Cronkite, America's commentator-in-chief, in words that took the audience behind the scenes and revealed the man more fully. Brinkley is an eloquent speaker and storyteller; he bids fair to succeed David McCullough as our nation's favorite historian.

Open-Ticketed

Books

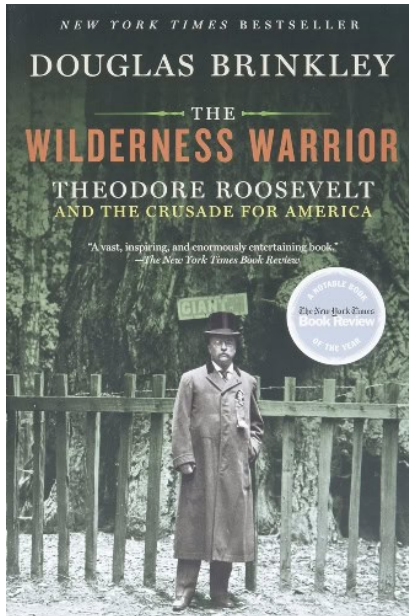


Silent Spring Revolution: John F. Kennedy, Rachel Carson, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and the Great Environmental Awakening

With the detonation of the Trinity explosion in the New Mexico desert in 1945, the United States took control of Earth's destiny for the first time. After the Truman administration dropped atomic bombs on Japan to end World War II, a grim new epoch had arrived. During the early Cold War years, the federal government routinely detonated nuclear devices in the Nevada desert and the Marshall Islands. Not only was nuclear fallout a public health menace, but entire ecosystems were contaminated with radioactive materials. During the 1950s, an unprecedented postwar economic boom took hold, with America becoming the world's leading hyperindustrial and military giant. But with this historic prosperity came a heavy cost: oceans began to die, wilderness vanished, the insecticide DDT poisoned ecosystems, wildlife perished, and chronic smog blighted major cities. In *Silent Spring Revolution*, Douglas Brinkley pays tribute to those who combated the mauling of the natural world in the Long Sixties: Rachel Carson (a marine biologist and author), David Brower (director of the Sierra Club), Barry Commoner (an environmental justice advocate), Coretta Scott King (an antinuclear activist), Stewart Udall (the secretary of the interior), William O. Douglas (Supreme Court justice), Cesar Chavez (a labor organizer), and other crusaders are profiled with verve and insight. Carson's book *Silent Spring*, published in 1962, depicted how detrimental DDT was to living creatures. The exposé launched an ecological revolution that inspired such landmark legislation as the Wilderness Act (1964), the Clean Air Acts (1963 and 1970), and the Endangered Species Acts (1966, 1969, and 1973). In intimate detail, Brinkley extrapolates on such epic events as the Donora (Pennsylvania) smog incident, JFK's Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, Great Lakes preservation, the Santa Barbara oil spill, and

the first Earth Day. With the United States grappling with climate change and resource exhaustion, Douglas Brinkley's meticulously researched and deftly written *Silent Spring Revolution* reminds us that a new generation of twenty-first-century environmentalists can save the planet from ruin.

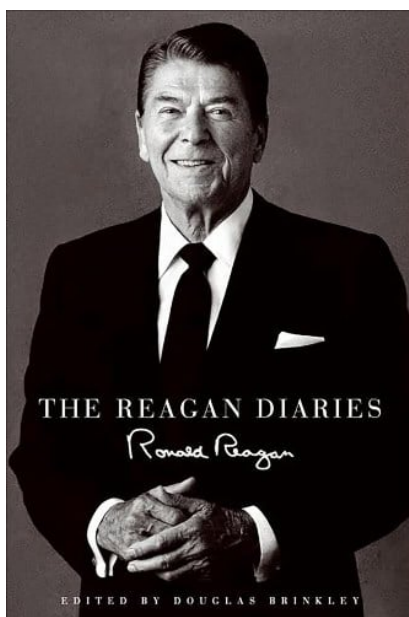
[BUY THE BOOK](#)



The Wilderness Warrior: Theodore Roosevelt and the Crusade for America

In this groundbreaking epic biography, Douglas Brinkley draws on never-before-published materials to examine the life and achievements of our "naturalist president." By setting aside more than 230 million acres of wild America for posterity between 1901 and 1909, Theodore Roosevelt made conservation a universal endeavor. This crusade for the American wilderness was perhaps the greatest U.S. presidential initiative between the Civil War and World War I. Roosevelt's most important legacies led to the creation of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and passage of the Antiquities Act in 1906. His executive orders saved such treasures as Devils Tower, the Grand Canyon, and the Petrified Forest.

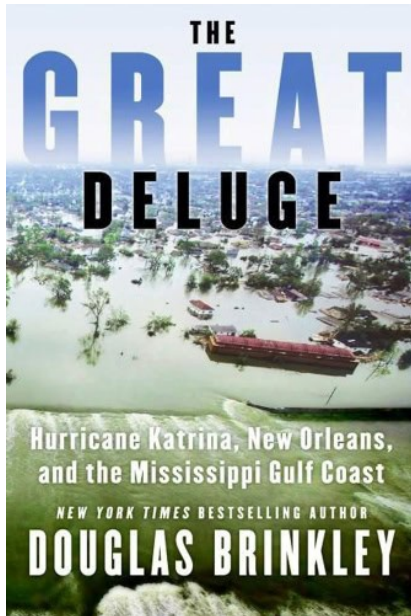
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The Reagan Diaries

During his two terms as the fortieth president of the United States, Ronald Reagan kept a daily diary in which he recorded, by hand, his innermost thoughts and observations on the extraordinary, the historic, and the routine day-to-day occurrences of his presidency. Brought together in one volume and edited by historian Douglas Brinkley, *The Reagan Diaries* provides a striking insight into one of this nation's most important presidencies and shed new light on the character of this American leader.

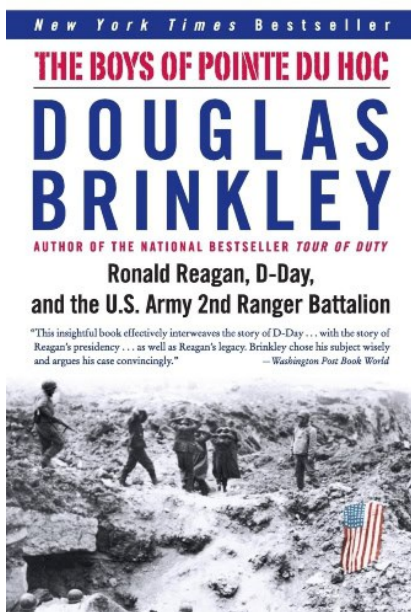
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The Great Deluge: Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans, and the Mississippi Gulf Coast

In the span of five violent hours on August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina destroyed major Gulf Coast cities and flattened 150 miles of coastline. But it was only the first stage of a shocking triple tragedy. On the heels of one of the three strongest hurricanes ever to make landfall in the United States came the storm-surge flooding, which submerged a half-million homes—followed by the human tragedy of government mismanagement, which proved as cruel as the natural disaster itself. In *The Great Deluge*, bestselling author Douglas Brinkley finds the true heroes of this unparalleled catastrophe, and lets the survivors tell their own stories, masterly allowing them to record the nightmare that was Katrina.

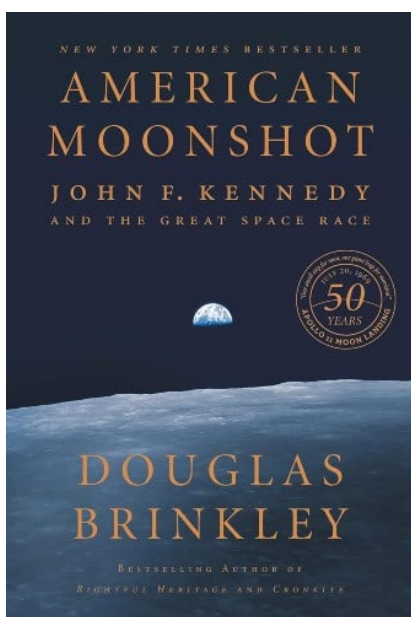
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The Boys of Pointe Du Hoc: Ronald Reagan, D-Day, and the U.S. Army 2nd Ranger Battalion

The 100-foot promontory known as Pointe du Hoc -- where six big German guns were ensconced -- was the number one target of the heavy U.S. and British warships poised in the English Channel on D-Day morning. Facing arguably the toughest task to befall U.S. forces during the war, the brave men of the Army 2nd Ranger Battalion boldly took control of the fortified cliff and set in motion the liberation of Europe. Based upon recently released documents, here is the first in-depth, anecdotal remembrance of these fearless Army Rangers. Acclaimed author and historian Douglas Brinkley deftly moves between events four decades apart to tell two riveting stories: the making of Ronald Reagan's historic 1984 speeches about the storming of the Normandy coast and the actual heroic event that inspired them and helped to end the Second World War.

[BUY THE BOOK](#)



American Moonshot: John F. Kennedy and the Great Space Race

On May 25, 1961, JFK made an astonishing announcement: his goal of putting a man on the moon by the end of the decade. In this engrossing, fast-paced epic, Douglas Brinkley returns to the 1960s to recreate one of the most exciting and ambitious achievements in the history of humankind. *American Moonshot* brings together the extraordinary political, cultural, and scientific factors that fueled the birth and development of NASA and the Mercury, Gemini and Apollo projects, which shot the United States to victory in the space race against the Soviet Union at the height of the Cold War. Drawing on new primary source material and major interviews with many of the surviving figures who were key to America's success, Brinkley brings this fascinating history to life as never before. *American Moonshot* is a portrait of the brilliant men and women who made this giant leap possible, the technology that enabled us to propel men beyond earth's orbit to the moon and return them safely, and the geopolitical tensions that spurred Kennedy to commit himself fully to this audacious dream. Brinkley's ensemble cast of *New Frontier*

characters include rocketeer Wernher von Braun, astronaut John Glenn and space booster Lyndon Johnson. A vivid and enthralling chronicle of one of the most thrilling, hopeful, and turbulent eras in the nation's history, American Moonshot is an homage to scientific ingenuity, human curiosity, and the boundless American spirit.

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Douglas Brinkley is available to book via these agencies

✔ Recommended



Speaking Agency