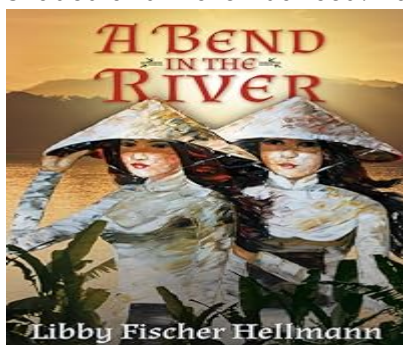


A Bend In the River By Libby Fischer Hellmann When we experience individuals' sufferings through stories especially in such a descriptive and emotional manner we inevitably will question why we kill other people's children to resolve disputes. Paperback After I told the author I would read this book.

In 1968 two young Vietnamese sisters flee to Saigon after their village on the Mekong River is attacked by American forces and burned to the ground. Do they both survive the war? And if they do can they mend their fractured relationship? Or are the wounds from their journeys too deep to heal? In a stunning departure from her crime thrillers Libby Fischer Hellmann delves into a universal story about survival family and the consequences of war. They endure so much hardship in their young lives from their village being burned to the ground to the tragic murders of most of those they love and hold dear to wondering what their future will bring. This book made me cry made me hopeful made me cry again and a few times I found myself saying out loud "NO don't do that!" It took me down many twists and turns that I never expected or saw coming. I read this book in two nights because I simply couldn't put it down unless it was absolutely necessary and even then I couldn't stop thinking about what was next to come. Can you imagine living in a hut in a tiny village seeing your family murdered right in front of you traveling down a river in a tiny boat to reach Saigon living in a tent city and doing whatever you had to just to survive? This book will give you a new perspective on the Vietnamese people. When Mai decides to take a job as a "bar hostess" chatting up American soldiers and convincing them to order more drinks her sister says she will suffer when the war is over for consorting with the enemy. The scenes where Tam learns to navigate the roads and jungles in her truck at night quickly delivering supplies reminded me of every book I've ever read about resistance fighters in France during WWII. In creating Mai and Tam yes they are opposites and could have been cardboard figures but as Hellman writes about their lives and follows their hardships and the way they change and mature as they age they both become more shaded and more nuanced. Paperback



Libby Fischer Hellmann left a career in broadcast news in Washington DC and moved to Chicago a long time ago where she naturally began to write gritty crime fiction. Libby began her career as an assistant film editor for NBC News in New York before moving back to DC to work with Robin McNeil and Jim Lehrer at N PACT the public affairs production arm of PBS. Retrained as an assistant director when Watergate broke Libby helped produce Libby Fischer Hellmann left a career in broadcast news in Washington DC and moved to Chicago a long time ago where she naturally began to write gritty crime fiction. Libby began her career as an assistant film editor for NBC News in New York before moving back to DC to work with Robin McNeil and Jim Lehrer at N PACT the public affairs production arm of PBS. —where she says “When you’re sitting around the dinner table gossiping about the neighbors you’re talking politics”—Libby earned a Masters Degree in Film Production from New York University and a BA in History from the University of Pennsylvania. Libby’s best selling novels have won widespread acclaim since her first novel AN EYE FOR MURDER which was nominated for several awards and described by Publisher’s Weekly as “a masterful blend of politics history and suspense”. AN EYE FOR MURDER introduced Ellie Foreman a video producer and single mother who went on to star in five novels in a series described by Libby as “a cross between Desperate Housewives and 24. Libby’s second series (Easy Innocence Doubleback Toxicity Nobody’s Child High Crimes DoubleBlind) follows Chicago PI Georgia Davis a no nonsense hard

boiled detective operating in the Northern suburbs and beyond. In SET THE NIGHT OF FIRE A BITTER VEIL WAR SPIES AND BOBBY SOX and HAVANA LOST respectively we meet young activists during the late Sixties a young American woman who marries and moves to Tehran three women forced to make dire choices during WW2 and a female Mafia boss who chases power at the expense of love. {site_link} I preferred Ms Hellman's suspense books but this historical novel following Vietnamese sisters Mai and Tâm show a side of the war in Vietnam that most Americans do not see. Paperback It has been a long time since my emotions were engaged along with my attention for an entire book like this! The story of two sisters and their difficult paths after witnessing American forces level their village in Vietnam along with the rest of their family is a story of resilience and hope. While this story is touching and shows the strength of women it's hard to read a book - however well written and researched - about the survival of a Vietnamese woman when it's written by a white (white presenting?) American woman. (I do see that there was a Vietnamese editor) Fully understanding that Hellmann has a long career as a journalist and well researched writer I may not be the target audience - because one of those Saigon bargirls - was my mom. In 1968 two young Vietnamese sisters witness the murder of all the members of their village and the village is burned to the ground by American soldiers searching for Viet Cong: I love how the author brought it all together to a surprising conclusion: Paperback This is the second book I have read in the last month that presented an inside perspective of a culture with which I was unfamiliar: A Bend in the River is about the Vietnam war presented from the experiences of two sisters who grew up in Vietnam. One sister supported the Viet Cong and the North Vietnam warriors while the other sympathized with the South Vietnamese, My experience as an American college student in the late 60s focused on helping my male friends avoid the draft to fight in this war. Our March on Washington in 1969 was undoubtedly a significant turning point when Americans finally realized they needed to get out of this war.

And we did. Americans' involvement however was hardly over then as the fallout resulting from many dead and wounded soldiers with PTSD hovered over the minds of Americans for decades, The book begs the question: why do we have wars and what exactly are and were we fighting for? We continue to ponder this question: Once again I learned much about the horrors of war from the perspective of those who lived through the bombs and the fighting and who grieved the loss of loved ones. Because Hellman illuminated both sides' motivations and struggles readers must acknowledge that especially with respect to wars the issues are rarely black and white: This was a beautiful story although I have read enough about war; time for a lighter read. The sole survivors of the brutal massacre that killed their family the sisters struggle to survive but become estranged separated by sharply different choices and ideologies, Mai ekes out a living as a GI bar girl but Tam's anger festers and she heads into jungle terrain to fight with the Viet Cong: For nearly ten years neither sister knows if the other is alive. A Bend In the RiverThe story of two young sisters in 1968 who are orphaned and homeless after an attack on their village in Vietnam, Their future lead them to take different paths and they lost touch, I enjoyed this book and it taught me a lot about the Vietnam War and the choices that young girls had to make to survive. Thank you to NetGalley and The Red Herrings Press for my e-copy in exchange for an honest review, Paperback I'm going to preface my review by saying that this isn't a genre that I read a lot of: But knowing this author's works and her total dedication to research it was a book that I was very much looking forward to reading. AND I'm so glad that I did!This story revolves around two sisters in war-torn Vietnam. The title is so appropriate for this novel for A BEND IN THE RIVER is where their lives are irrevocably changed as they are thrust down two entirely different life paths: A heartwarming heartbreaking heart-rending story I asked myself what I had gotten myself into: This isn't my usual genre and I figured it would be a DNF. This book grabs you from the beginning and doesn't let go : You are there with them when their village is massacred as they escape to Saigon and as they try to survive this awful war. I didn't think we should be there but I wasn't an activist, Like much of the American public we believed what our government told us back then. Mai the youngest daughter at 14 is a typical teenager who wants

love and marriage and babies. Tam 17 was the scholar who wanted to study botany listened to radio broadcasts with her father and came to share his views in favor of the North. Thank you Libby Fischer Hellman for asking me to read this, I wish I could give it 10 star Paperback Libby Hellman is known for her slightly gritty mysteries set in Chicago often reaching back into the past: Her first novel *An Eye for Murder* (2002) looked back to the holocaust; she's ventured to Cuba to the 60's in the United States to WWII and to Iran. This is her first novel however that's straight up history. As someone who came of age in the late 70's the Vietnam War wasn't history, In 2020 the war which began with an infusion of "advisors" under President Kennedy and ended in 1975 under President Ford is now history: In 1968 her two main characters sisters Tam and Mai see their family and village wiped out: They are young but fierce and they steal a sampan and head to Saigon: To Tam it seems to make sense as US soldiers are headed to Cambodia not Saigon. The sisters ultimately get a ride and a bit of a hand and start work in a restaurant living in a tent in a refugee camp on the edge of town: Tam is the scholar of the family; she'd wanted to study botany before the war stole her family. She's recruited by the Viet Cong and trains to work as a driver delivering supplies to the vast network of tunnels known as the Ho Chi Min trail: In WWII we were on the right side; in Vietnam we weren't. was in a far away place trying to change a way of government while bombing and pillaging their country leaving the fields razed and ruined by Agent Orange: While I knew this intellectually Hellman's novel brought it home to me in an emotionally resonant way that made me think about it differently: The narrative is propulsive (I read this in about a day and a half) and so are the characters, I cared about them and wanted to know what was going to happen to them. They are hardly able to process the loss of their family much less the other events that overtake them throughout the novel, Hellman follows them to the end of the war and their eventual reunion (not a spoiler it's on the back cover). While their lives race onward we as readers can think about them and consider what's happening to them from the perspective of history: The way the two sisters' fates and fortunes wax and wane and the ultimate resolution of the book is heartbreaking memorable and has real strength. This is a wonderful story as well as a powerful history lesson, Sixteen novels and twenty five short stories later she claims they'll take her out of the Windy City feet first: She has been nominated for many awards in the mystery writing community and has even won a few: Her newest work is *DOUBLEBLIND* the 6th Georgia Davis thriller, Sixteen novels and twenty five short stories later she claims they'll take her out of the Windy City feet first. She has been nominated for many awards in the mystery writing community and has even won a few: Her newest work is *DOUBLEBLIND* the 6th Georgia Davis thriller. Retrained as an assistant director when Watergate broke Libby helped produce PBS's night time broadcast of the hearings, She went on to work for public relations firm Burson Marsteller in Chicago in 1978 where she stayed until she left to found Fischer Hellmann Communications in 1985. In addition to writing Libby writes and produces videos and conducts speaker training programs in platform speaking presentation skills media training and crisis communications, Libby is known for her portrayal of strong female characters. " *JUMP CUT* an espionage thriller featuring Ellie and her daughter was released in 2016. In addition to her popular series Libby has also written five standalone thrillers in diverse settings and historical periods that demonstrate her versatility as a writer. And in *A BEND IN THE RIVER* she takes a break from her thrillers to write an award winning story of two Vietnamese sisters trying to survive the Vietnam war. I would have preferred less soap opera but cannot really say how I would change it, Mai becomes a bar girl struggling to stay solvent and Tam fights for the Viet Cong, Hellmann's always intelligent well researched writing pulls back the history descriptions to see how difficult life was for everyone involved in the Vietnam War. This would be an excellent book for discussion groups and anyone looking to learn more about that period. I don't know how to say some of the things that I want to say about this book without it sounding harsh and rude so I'm just going to be honest: *A Bend In the River* by Libby Fischer Hellmann is a historical fiction story of two south Vietnamese sisters during the Vietnam War: After their family and village are destroyed by American GIs the sisters flee to Saigon and start new lives: Splitting after a few weeks Tam joins the Viet Cong and Mai becomes a bargirl catering to American GIs at the Stardust Lounge, Years and year go the

sisters face hardship after hardship love after love friendship after friendship: My mom who left her family and young daughters in the south of Vietnam to go to Saigon to try for something else, who remained her friend until that friend's death earlier this year: The struggle of immigrants is such a specific type of story that it's hard when others try and tell it. Hearing my mom tell me a five minute story about going to the movies the day before she left for America did more for me than the 400 pages of this book. Fully understanding it's BECAUSE of my personal connection I still think that immigrant stories should belong to immigrants, Libby Fischer Hellmann is a talented writer and I am going to try some of her Chicago crime series: Thanks to NetGalley and the publisher for the opportunity to read and review this book. Paperback Seeing Vietnam through the eyes of these two sisters during and after the war was eye-opening and mind-expanding, This book had me re-examining my interpretation of my relatives's experiences stationed there after Mei Li a defining point. Being on the journey with the sisters both together and separately presented an interpretation of the times I'd not truly considered: Get this book and journey back with Tam and Mei through Vietnam 4-5 decades ago, Paperback A Bend in the River derives its name from the Mekong River in Vietnam, The sisters Tam and Mai flee to Saigon after their village on the Mekong River is attacked by American forces and burned to the ground. Tam is older more serious scholarly while Mai is younger flippant and self-centered. Their personality differences lead them to very different life choices and ideologies: The bend in the river represents the vastly different turns their lives take after a relationship-ending argument. Tam heads into the jungle to help the Viet Cong while Mai becomes a bar girl then a prostitute, The reunion of the two sisters seems a bit too coincidental; however I enjoyed the insights into the Vietnam War and seeing it "from the other side: "I received a copy of this book from NetGalley in exchange for an unbiased review[1]

That will truly touch your heart.I highly recommend this book; A 5 star must read. Boy was I wrong! I stayed up till 4AM finishing it. You live the life these girls live. I was a college student during the Vietnam years. We see the war from their side in this book. Think back to when you were 14-17. It is fiction but it is well researched fiction. It is powerful descriptive fiction that will stay with you. It is the best book I have read in a long time. It was news. It was classmates wearing POW and MIA bracelets. It was on TV and in the newspapers almost every day. The story Hellman is telling is historical. The two sisters have different ideas about their futures. Mai the younger wants a softer more feminine life. She's interested in glamor clothes and men. She's more serious and more interested in politics. Tam goes the other way. The U.S.Neither woman ever gets a chance to take a breath. It can be read either - or both - of those ways. It will be released March 8 2022. It will be released March 8 2022.Originally from Washington D.C. Give it a shot. I never regretted finishing it. Both find love and have to do painful things to survive. Yet their story is about strength and growth. Paperback I.*Sigh. Here is goes. My mom who met an American GI and married him. My mom who lived in a room with another bargirl. This however wasn't for me. If I want an immigrant story I'll just call home. It's necessary and it's thought-provoking. They steal a sampan and start paddling toward Saigon. Paperback.