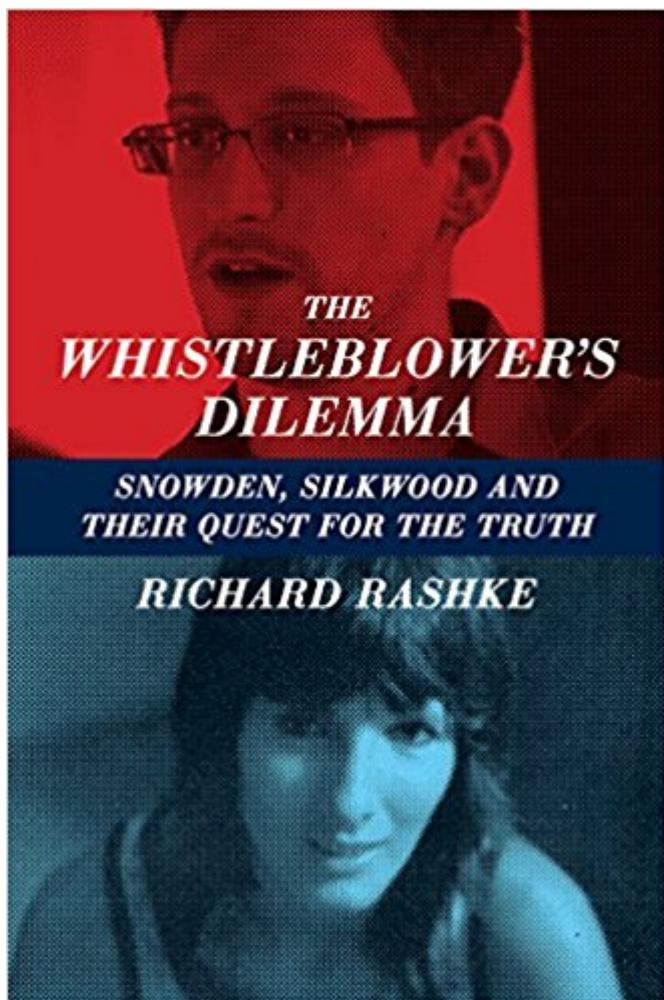


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# The Whistleblower's Dilemma: Snowden, Silkwood And Their Quest For The Truth



## Synopsis

In June of 2013, Edward Snowden, a 29-year-old former CIA employee, thrust himself into the spotlight when he leaked thousands of top secret National Security Agency (NSA) documents to the journalist, Glen Greenwald. Immediately branded as a whistleblower, Snowden reignited an international debate about private citizens who reveal government secrets that should be exposed but may endanger the lives of citizens. Like the late Karen Silkwood, whose death in a car accident while bringing incriminating evidence against her employer to a meeting with a New York Times reporter, is still a mystery, Snowden was intent upon revealing the controversial practices of his employer, a government contractor. Rightly or wrongly, Snowden and Silkwood believed that their revelations would save lives. In his riveting, thought-provoking book, Richard Rashke weaves between the lives of these two controversial figures and creates a narrative context for a discussion of what constitutes a citizen's duty to reveal or not to reveal. He asks the question: can our government regulators, our politicians, our military-intelligence and our profit-oriented corporations be trusted to protect us from harm as well as safeguard our privacy?

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

PRAISE FOR The Killing of Karen Silkwood: "This riveting book gets beyond the surface facts and simple emotions of the Silkwood case to the fundamental and in some cases frightening aspect of a story that may never be completely told." (Christian Science Monitor) "An impressive and vital new book, or better yet, just call it "impressive and vital. . ." ".

meets a demanding test of objectivity. (Washington Post) "An admirable job of separating what is fact. . .from supposition, what is theory from what is documented evidence. For that alone, the book is valuable." (New Republic) "Nobody could be not Ian Fleming, not Agatha Christie could have concocted a murder mystery/spy thriller as intriguing as the Karen Silkwood story." (The Trial Diplomacy Journal) "First-rate reporting and tight, edgy writing." (Kirkus Reviews) "A true-life thriller. . . raises serious and disturbing questions." (Playboy) "Exciting. . .important." (Boston Globe) "A powerful indictment of one nuclear corporation and the nuclear industry as a whole." (Library Journal) "Chilling." (Atlantic Monthly) "Suspense is ever-present. Shocks are electric." (San Francisco Chronicle) "This jam-packed little thriller has all the elements of a best-selling novel. . .There is one catch. It's all true." (Florida Sun-Sentinel)

Richard Rashke is the author of several nonfiction books including *The Killing of Karen Silkwood*, *Useful Enemies*, and *Escape from Sobibor*. His books have been translated into eleven languages and have been adapted for stage and screen (*Silkwood* was made into the Academy Award-winning film starring Meryl Streep; *Escape from Sobibor* was made into an acclaimed ten part mini-series). Rashke is also a screenwriter and a playwright whose work has appeared on network television as well as in theaters in New York, Washington and Miami. He lives in Washington, D.C.

Most interesting and well-researched pros and cons of the impact of whistleblowers on their subjects as well as their own lives. A good read.

Pretty good read.

THE WHISTLEBLOWER'S DILEMMA: SNOWDEN,SILKWOOD AND THEIR QUESTS FOR THE TRUTH BY RICHARD RASHKE. I received this book from goodreads in exchange for a review. Traitor or hero? That's the debate that is still raging about Edward Snowden. Did his exposing the meta data mining of millions of Americans not terrorists but Americans! How about Karen Silkwood? She did the same as Snowden, compromised national security to tell , or try to tell the American public about the government corruption of the nuclear agencies and died(murdered) trying. Two people who have to make a choice: ignore the lawbreaking or tell the country. I found this book left me with more questions than answers. The writing was not one sided but just

presented the facts laid out and lets the reader decide. I was totally impressed with Mr. Rashke's writing and how he laid out both stories to let me decide .

A fascinating comparison of the whistleblower cases of Edward Snowden and Karen Silkwood. I liked how the author chose a less likely comparison -- Karen Silkwood rather than Daniel Ellsberg or Bill Binney -- it makes the book somewhat unique and also makes it so the two cases aren't too similar. It also seems very well researched! I definitely want to check out the author's other book about Karen Silkwood.

Richard Rashke's newest book reconsiders Karen Silkwood's story by drawing parallels to the ongoing case surrounding NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden. Though Rashke's fans know that he has covered Karen Silkwood's story previously in *The Killing of Karen Silkwood*, her story is deserving of an updated look for new audiences. While Snowden's story continues to unfold, Silkwood's is tragically over, and reading their stories side by side was thoroughly absorbing. *The Whistleblower's Dilemma: Snowden, Silkwood and Their Quest for the Truth* by Richard Rashke is sure to create more important debate about the morality and legality of whistleblowing.

According to Rashke, sociological studies show that at least half the people who have seen wrongdoing in their workplace choose to remain silent. In one study, some common traits are observed among whistleblowers. The study by Joyce Rothschild and Terence Miethe (page 9 of Rashke) claims that a vast majority were naïve before reporting the wrongdoing; see their job ratings decline (eventually sacked or forced to resign); and feel stressed, insecure, isolated, powerless, paranoid, and physically and mentally ill. Rashke's account of Edward Snowden and Karen Silkwood (of whom he had written a detailed book, now in the second edition) does not measure them to fit the profile of a typical whistleblower as described in the Rothschild-Miethe report. Although he leaves the final assessment to the reader, it is clear that Rashke sees Snowden and Silkwood as victims of oppressive corporations (and the US government). He portrays them as heroes. A detailed account of the Snowden leak is told in the breath-taking book by Luke Harding called, *The Snowden Files*. Rashke's present book gives a shorter, no less exciting version. He shortens the story in order that the Silkwood story

can be told side by side. The purpose of Rashke's book is not to set out the full stories of the leaks, but to examine the motives of whistleblowers generally and of Snowden and Silkwood specifically. This book compels the reader to contemplate the substance of heroism, the value of truth, and the nature of duty. Sometimes being honest and acting honestly is no different from being heroic. The reader is also invited to think about the effect of one's character and personal history and how that, in the right moment, may trigger the whistleblowing act. The Snowden disclosure is vast. In summary, it is a disclosure that the US and UK governments have been spying on everybody for foreign governments as well as their own citizens. In Silkwood, the disclosure concerns poor safety procedures and safeguards for unsuspecting employees in the Kerr-McGee nuclear plant, and a missing 40 pounds of plutonium enough to make four atomic bombs, and the dubious role of the Atomic Energy Commission (subsequently disbanded by Congress). Snowden and Silkwood are not regarded as heroes by everyone. There are many who see Snowden as a traitor and Silkwood as a heartless mother and a drug addict. The adverse opinions (as appears in one of Rashke's chapter titles) are set out for the reader's evaluation. Wrongdoing occurs mainly because the wrongdoer thinks that he can get away with it. He thinks so because he either thinks that nobody would know or that no one can do anything about it (or both). I quote Rashke, who quotes Snowden, who quotes Benjamin Franklin, who said: "Those who surrender freedom for security will not have, nor do they deserve, either one."

There have been many books and articles on Edward Snowden, some of which I've read. I don't think anyone has given his life the sustained narrative arc as the author of this book. Beyond this, Richard Rashe, who is an authority on the life of Karen Silkwood, has chosen a worthy companion to Snowden in this book which breezily yet powerfully makes one understand why being a whistleblower in America is such a dangerous occupation.

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