

# Stories of Identity, Adversity, and Triumph Take Center Stage at the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books 2025

*These five powerful narratives offer readers hope, healing, and a more profound understanding of the human spirit.*

YORBA LINDA, CA, UNITED STATES, April 17, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- At this year's [Los Angeles Times Festival of Books](#), Inks and Bindings will present a curated selection of titles that reflect the power of literature to mirror real-life struggles and triumphs. This year's showcase features five thought-provoking works, each united by themes of resilience, identity, and transformation.

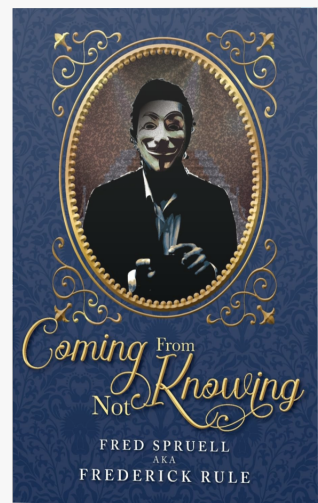
Spanning genres including memoir, military history, and poetic reflection, these titles delve into emotional healing, systemic injustice, and the quiet victories that shape personal growth. Each author offers a unique lens through which adversity is confronted and reshaped into a source of strength and meaning.

Festival attendees can explore these impactful stories at Inks and Bindings' Booth #930, located in the Black Zone at the University of Southern California campus, on April 26–27, 2025.

Rising from the ashes of adversity,



Walking Through the Fire of Life: From The Fiery Ashes of Despair, The Phoenix Emerges

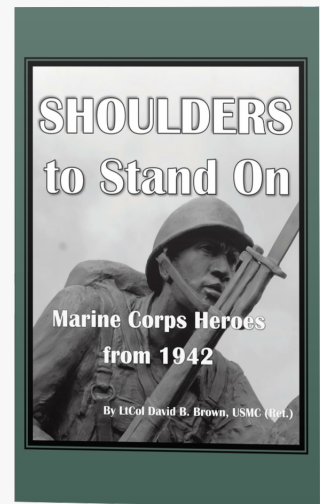


Coming From Not Knowing

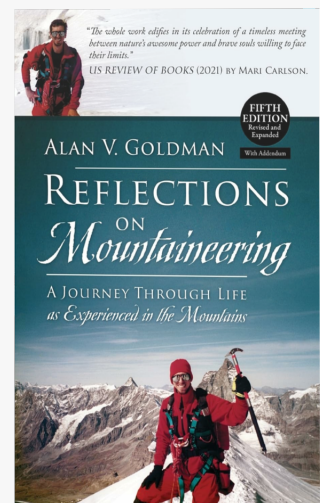
“Walking Through the Fire of Life: From The Fiery Ashes of Despair, The Phoenix Emerges” offers a compelling account of one man’s determination to reclaim his life. In this powerful memoir, Marvin Kasim Sr. opens a window into the trials and triumphs that defined his early years—marked by abandonment, foster care, and the ache of unanswered questions. The book traces a deeply personal quest for identity and closure, but it also speaks to a broader audience: individuals who feel trapped by their circumstances yet quietly long for change. Through grit, self-discovery, and an unwavering belief in a better tomorrow, Kasim demonstrates how even the harshest beginnings can give rise to a future filled with hope and meaning.

With honesty and conviction, Marvin Kasim Sr. shares how he moved from survival mode to a life of intentional purpose—joining the AirForce, working multiple jobs, and earning a college degree along the way. The book is not merely a chronicle of personal growth but a universal message to anyone who has ever felt overlooked, unloved, or underestimated. By sharing his truth, Kasim Sr. invites readers to confront their own inner battles and to rise—like the phoenix—from whatever fire life has thrown their way.

In a world that often imposes identities before individuals can define themselves, “Coming From Not Knowing” by Frederick Rule presents a compelling exploration of self-discovery and emotional truth. Drawing from a life shaped by the complexities of race, family, and societal pressure, the author invites readers into a narrative marked by quiet strength and profound transformation. His early years on a Mississippi cotton plantation formed the foundation for a journey filled with questions of self-worth and belonging—questions that later found expression



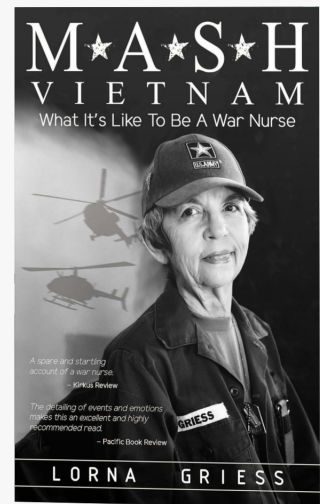
Shoulders to Stand On Marine Corps Heroes from 1942



Reflections on Mountaineering: A Journey Through Life as Experienced in the Mountains (FIFTH EDITION, Revised and Expanded) with Addendum

in both the performing arts and the field of psychology.

This memoir serves not only as a personal reflection but as a broader commentary on the human experience. By uncovering how anonymity—as experienced during his time portraying the Phantom in *The Phantom of the Opera*—became a form of liberation, the author reveals the surprising places where healing can begin. Through vulnerability, connection, and a dedication to growth, “Coming From Not Knowing” delivers a message that resonates across backgrounds: identity is not something assigned but something discovered.



M\*A\*S\*H Vietnam: What it's like to be a war nurse

A vital contribution to military literature, “Shoulders to Stand On: Marine Corps Heroes from 1942” offers an unfiltered look at the systemic racism once embedded in one of the nation’s most respected institutions—and the heroes who rose above it. Written by retired Marine LtCol David B. Brown, the book highlights 18 Black-American Marines whose resilience and dedication laid the foundation for lasting change in the Corps and beyond.

Brown’s deep military background lends authority and empathy to the book’s narrative. Having served as a rifle company commander in Vietnam and a procurement budget chief for the Marine Corps, he approaches the subject matter with both personal insight and historical precision. “Shoulders to Stand On: Marine Corps Heroes from 1942” is more than a historical record—it’s a tribute to progress, perseverance, and the quiet heroes whose legacy continues to shape the fabric of American service.

In “Reflections on Mountaineering: A Journey Through Life as Experienced in the Mountains (FIFTH EDITION, Revised and Expanded) with Addendum,” author and seasoned climber Alan V. Goldman offers a compelling blend of poetry, philosophy, and personal insight shaped by over thirty years of mountaineering experience. Presented through 138 narrative-style poems—some in rhyme, others in prose or blank verse—the collection captures the emotional and psychological terrain of a climber’s world. Yet this body of work speaks to more than the mountain environment alone; it becomes a mirror through which readers are invited to consider universal themes such as fear, ambition, perseverance, and the search for meaning.

This latest edition expands on Goldman’s original vision, serving as a profound meditation on the human condition through the lens of high-altitude challenges. The poems reflect not only the

physical realities of climbing but also the internal struggles and revelations that often accompany such pursuits. With a literary voice shaped by years in both the legal world and on rugged peaks, Goldman explores how climbers confront fate, embrace discipline, and derive purpose not only from reaching summits but from the journey itself.

Witnessing war through a nurse's eyes, Lorna Griess captures the grit and grace of battlefield medicine in her compelling memoir, "M\*A\*S\*H Vietnam: What It's Like to Be a War Nurse". In this powerful account, Griess invites readers into a world rarely seen—where courage is defined not by combat, but by compassion under fire. As a young nurse stationed in a Mobile Army Surgical Hospital in South Vietnam, she provides an unfiltered glimpse into the emotional and physical toll of caring for the wounded amidst the chaos of war. Her story extends beyond the battlefield, exploring the personal challenges of returning to a divided homeland and the quiet burden of transitioning back to civilian life. It is a moving tribute to the silent strength of those who served with empathy instead of arms.

Lorna Griess dedicated nearly thirty years to the Army Nurse Corps, retiring as a full colonel after serving in military hospitals around the world. Her final assignment as chief nurse at Letterman Army Medical Center capped off a distinguished career. Today, she continues to advocate for veterans through organizations like the Military Officers Association of America, AMVETS, and VFW, helping shape policy and legislation. An accomplished artist, Griess channels her life experiences into evocative oil paintings that have been exhibited in galleries throughout Sacramento. Whether through words or art, her voice remains a powerful reflection of a nurse's enduring service in wartime.

These five books stand as a powerful reminder that storytelling is not only an art—it's a lifeline. The authors showcased this year bring with them narratives shaped by grit, grace, and a determination to rise. Whether reflecting on personal journeys, untold histories, or universal truths, their words leave behind footprints for others to follow.

Festival attendees can explore these unforgettable narratives in person at Booth #930—or dive deeper by browsing the full selection online at [inksandbindings.com/latfobbooks2025](https://inksandbindings.com/latfobbooks2025). For more festival highlights, exclusive author interviews, and behind-the-scenes content, refer to the newest edition of the Inks and Bindings magazine at [inksandbindings.com/latfob-magazine](https://inksandbindings.com/latfob-magazine).

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