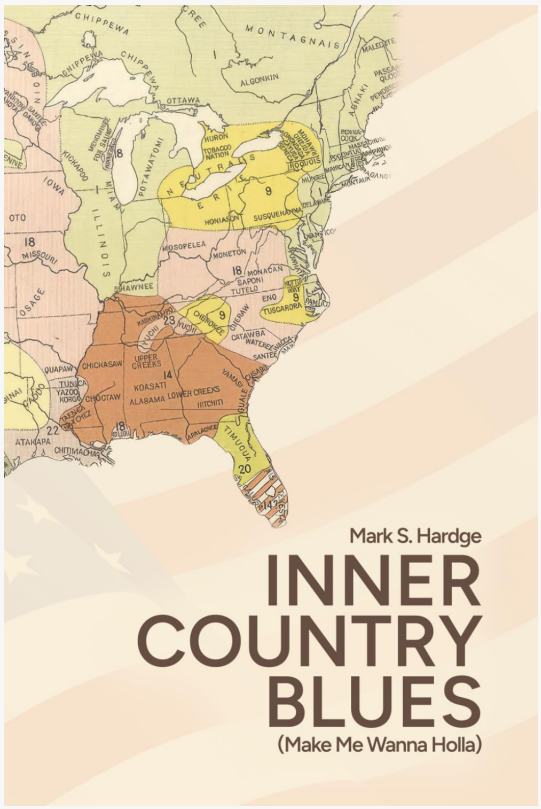
73-Year-Old Debut Author Mark S. Hardge Confronts History, Identity, and the Truths We Inherit in Inner Country Blues

An essay collection blends memoir, cultural criticism, and reflection to examine how family, nation, and history shape identity before folk recognize influence.

NEW YORK CITY, NY, UNITED STATES, September 16, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Marvin Gaye recorded “Inner City Blues (Make Me Wanna Holler)” in 1971 as a cry from the American margins—a grief so precise it became prophecy. More than fifty years later, that cry has not quieted. It has simply found new voices, new wounds, and new witnesses. “I am one of them,” says author Mark S. Hardge. At 73, Hardge is turning a lifetime of observation, experience, and reflection into an unflinching examination of identity, history, and personal truth in INNER COUNTRY BLUES: Make Me Wanna Holla, a debut collection of twenty-five personal essays that inhabits that same frequency—the frequency of a life fully lived, clearly examined, and honestly told.



INNER COUNTRY BLUES: Make Me Wann Holla by Mark S. Hardge

Across deeply personal essays, Hardge explores what it means to look back across decades of American life and recognize the forces that shaped a person long before they had the language, perspective, or opportunity to fully understand them.

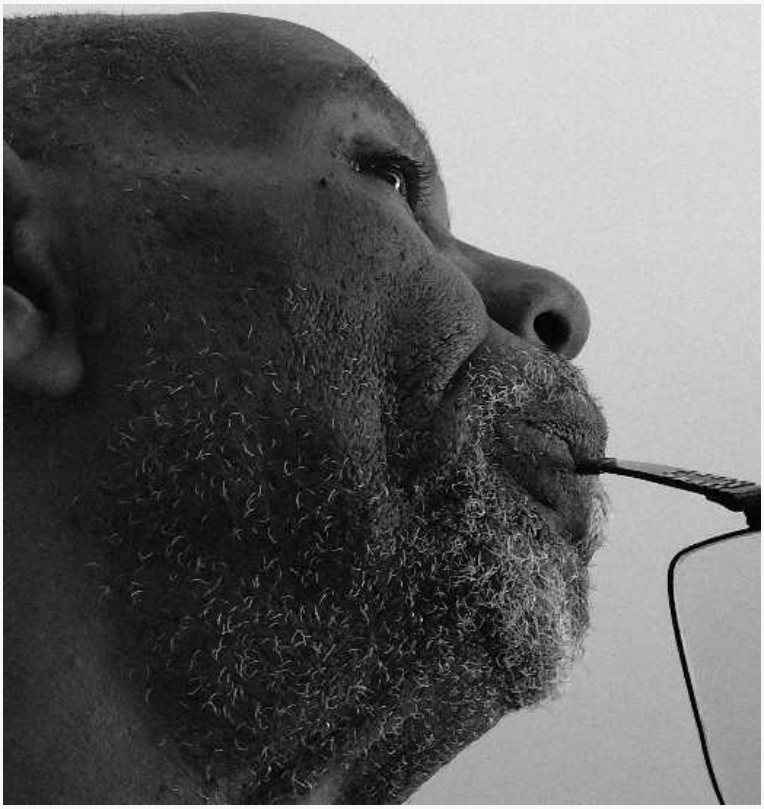
Blending memoir, cultural criticism, and moral philosophy, INNER COUNTRY BLUES examines the influence of family, race, national history, silence, and inherited beliefs while asking what happens when awareness arrives later in life and the past becomes impossible to ignore.

Rather than presenting history as something distant or abstract, Hardge approaches it through lived experience. As a Black American man whose life has stretched across many of the defining social and cultural chapters of modern America, he reflects on how broader historical forces can become embedded in individual lives, families, and identities.

At the center of the collection is the idea that people inherit far more than they consciously choose. Beliefs, expectations, wounds, loyalties, and silences can pass from one generation to the next, quietly influencing how people understand themselves and the world around them.

Hardge's essays examine the difficult process of recognizing those influences and deciding what should be carried forward, what must be questioned, and what finally needs to be said aloud.

INNER COUNTRY BLUES is ultimately a book about reckoning: with the past, with personal identity, and with the cost and necessity of telling the truth after a lifetime of carrying it.


Mark Hardge

The collection may appeal to readers interested in memoir, American history, race, identity, social commentary, and reflective nonfiction, as well as readers of authors such as Kiese Laymon, Eddie S. Glaude Jr., and Imani Perry.

INNER COUNTRY BLUES: Make Me Wanna Holla by Mark S. Hardge is available in Kindle, paperback, and hardcover editions through Amazon.

About the Author
Mark S. Hardge is the author of INNER COUNTRY BLUES: Make Me Wanna Holla, his debut collection of essays. Drawing from more than seven decades of lived experience, Hardge writes about identity, American history, race, family, memory, and the difficult process of understanding the forces that shape a life. His work combines personal reflection with cultural and moral examination, offering readers a candid account of what it means to confront the past and speak honestly about what remains.

The book is available at:
https://www.amazon.com/INNER-COUNTRY-BLUES-Make-Holla/dp/B0HHSQZCZX

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