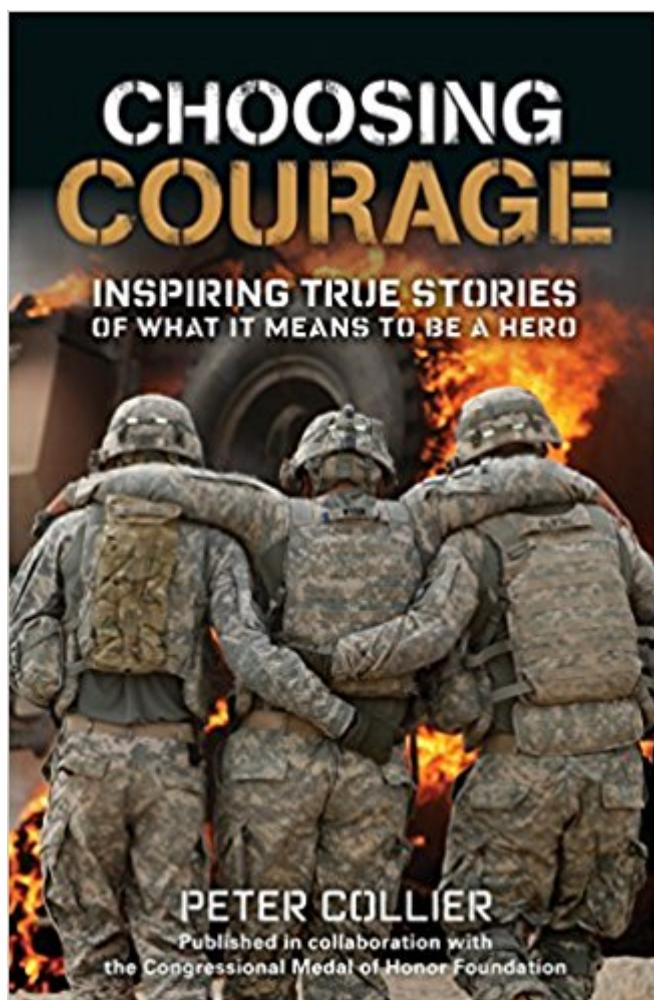


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# Choosing Courage: Inspiring True Stories Of What It Means To Be A Hero



## Synopsis

Riveting real-life accounts of heroism from Medal of Honor recipients, including Clinton Romesha (author of *Red Platoon: A True Story of American Valor*) and exceptional civilians like schoolteacher Jencie Fagan. How does an ordinary person become a hero? It happens in a split second, a moment of focus and clarity, when a choice is made. Here are the gripping accounts of Medal of Honor recipients who demonstrated guts and selflessness on the battlefield and confronted life-threatening danger to make a difference. There are the stories of George Sakato and Vernon Baker—both of whom overcame racial discrimination to enlist in the army during World War II (Sakato was a second-generation Japanese American, Baker an African American) and went on to prove that heroes come in all colors—and Clint Romesha, who led his outnumbered fellow soldiers against a determined enemy to prevent the Taliban from taking over a remote U.S. Army outpost in Afghanistan. Also included are civilians who have been honored by the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation for outstanding acts of bravery in crisis situations, from a school shooting to the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center. Adding depth and context are illuminating essays on the combat experience and its aftermath, covering topics such as overcoming fear; a mother mourning the loss of her son; and “surviving hell” as a prisoner of war.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Gr 4-8 Collier takes readers on an emotional journey into the trenches, through prisoner of war camps to makeshift hospitals, conveying the bravery that compels certain individuals to rise above their fear to protect and save others. Published in collaboration with the Congressional

Medal of Honor Foundation, the book devotes each chapter to a different tale of a medal recipient and is often followed by a page or two of background or historical information. Although the Medal of Honor was created in 1861, the book begins with stories from the battlefields of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. It includes a story from the attack on the World Trade Center, tales of heroism from Iraq and Afghanistan, Haiti, the Congo, and in the halls of an American middle school. Some of the 25 entries are told in the third person, while others are narrated by the hero in question. Most moving are the tales that are told by parents and children of the honorees. The book concludes with a note about the consequences of war and the history of the Congressional Medal of Honor.

**VERDICT** Middle grade readers will appreciate the consistent format, short chapters, straightforward language, photos, and background information, and will benefit from the factual material and the underlying lessons of courage. •MaryAnn Karre, West Middle School, Binghamton, NY --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

“Every story in this remarkable book is inspiring and deeply moving. The heroic accounts of bravery vanquishing fear and service before self should be mandatory reading for every child and adult in this country. •Gary Sinise, actor, musician, and founder of the Gary Sinise Foundation “The stories in this book . . . convey the human side of heroism. •The Baltimore Sun “Open to any page of Choosing Courage and prepare to be awed at the ability of ordinary people to do extraordinary things. These tales of heroism take the reader from World War II to Iraq and Afghanistan and to U.S. shores, where even a schoolteacher can face life-and-death situations. •The Philadelphia Inquirer “Collier takes readers on an emotional journey into the trenches, through prisoner of war camps to makeshift hospitals, conveying the bravery that compels certain individuals to rise above their fear to protect and save others. Published in collaboration with the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation, the book devotes each chapter to a different tale of a medal recipient and is often followed by a page or two of background or historical information. Although the Medal of Honor was created in 1861, the book begins with stories from the battlefields of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. It includes a story from the attack on the World Trade Center, tales of heroism from Iraq and Afghanistan, Haiti, the Congo, and in the halls of an American middle school. Some of the 25 entries are told in the third person, while others are narrated by the hero in question. Most moving are the tales that are told by parents and children of the honorees. The book concludes with a note about the consequences of war and the history of the Congressional Medal of Honor. **VERDICT:** Middle grade readers will appreciate the consistent format, short chapters,

straightforward language, photos, and background information, and will benefit from the factual material and the underlying lessons of courage. *School Library Journal* *As he did in his 2003 adult work, Medal of Honor, Collier spotlights recipients of America's highest military award in this book, published in collaboration with the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation. Collier broadens the scope of his tributes to include a handful of civilians who have been recognized by the foundation, yet his focus remains on veterans who distinguished themselves in WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Two especially relevant profiles to young readers are those of a Nevada middle-school teacher, who persuaded a student to surrender his gun after he opened fire at school, and a North Carolina boy who, after forging his mother's signature to enlist in WWII at age 13, threw himself on a grenade to save his fellow Marines at Iwo Jima. Similar accounts of self-sacrificing devotion and humility echo throughout these harrowing and, at times, horrific accounts of combat, intensifying their emotional impact. Interspersed b&w photos also help personalize the profiles, while sidebars provide succinct background information on the various wars. An illuminating and worthwhile resource.* *Publishers Weekly* *While this book targets ages 10 and up, I believe it to be a great addition to the library of anyone who loves history.* *About Families --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.*

These stories tell about the true heroes - all men and women who go to war to protect our freedoms and rights as a country! An honest picture of what happens on the battlefields around the world.

No debate needed, our culture is in sad decline, due in huge part to the lack of accurate and interesting history education. This book accomplishes both. History is just dry recitation of facts unless it is wearing the flesh of real people. This book introduces junior high and high school kids to the best of the best. Real heroes who were recognized for their bravery. I have personally met and shaken the hands of three MOH winners, each one humble and yet forthright about what happened and the necessity of action. "I was just in the wrong place at the right time," one told me. "I just did what needed doing," said another. Did you know you're statistically more likely to be struck by lightning than to shake the hand of a MOH recipient? I've shaken three of their hands, and I now flat out refuse to go outside during a thunderstorm. These men are to whom our kids should be looking for role models instead of spoiled, bratty actors, singers, and sports figures. And this book should be required reading for all students. Full disclosure: I received an advance copy of the e-book for free from the publisher in exchange for my unbiased review.

The cover of the book grabbed my heart and I also grateful it did. This book tells of true American heroes regardless of their race or religion. America today is obsessed with self-esteem, self-help, self actualization, and the belief that each individual is their own god. This book is an honest look at people who I've shown what true heroism is; it is a refreshing reminder of what the American philosophy of life once was and should be taught fearlessly and with pride to our young people today. It touched me deeply.

Peter Collier has hit another home run. His book, Medal of Honor, first published in 2003, has passed the 330,000 mark. His newest book tells story of extraordinary courage by military men, by civilians, by former military men and by women. I especially recommend the book for young people but it would also make a great gift to veterans and history buffs. Having just completed a book (Courage, Compassion, Marine: The Unique Story of Jimmie Dyess) about the only person to have received America's two highest awards for heroism, the Medal of Honor and the Carnegie Medal, I am especially impressed with Collier's brilliant writing and editing.

A wonderful book used in the Character Development Program of the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation.....

Outstanding. A must read.

I liked how it went in order depending on when they were. I would highly recommend this book for reading for fun or project

Outstanding stories written based on the facts

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