



# 365 Days

*Ronald J. Glasser*

Download now

Read Online ➔

# 365 Days

*Ronald J. Glasser*

**365 Days** Ronald J. Glasser

'The most convincing, most moving account I have yet read about what it was like to be an American soldier in Vietnam.' - Peter Prescott, Newsweek

## 365 Days Details

Date : Published January 22nd 2013 by Open Road Media (first published 1971)

ISBN :

Author : Ronald J. Glasser

Format : Kindle Edition 292 pages

Genre : History, War, Military Fiction, Nonfiction, Autobiography, Memoir

 [Download 365 Days ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online 365 Days ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online 365 Days Ronald J. Glasser**

---

# From Reader Review 365 Days for online ebook

## Don Halpert says

This book about the Vietnam War is not about politics or generals or strategy. It's a deeply personal account of the role and challenges of the medical personnel. The trauma and injuries of thousands of young people is often pushed away by the politics and history of the war.

The stories are often brutal and hard to read. The reality and the effects on individuals is told in an unflinching account. The details of medical intervention and, often, personal intervention are stark, often emotional. It reminds us of the effects on individuals - usually young men of 19 or 20 years of age. We are reminded of the 58,000 young people killed and the many thousands injured - some with life-long effect. In the face of overwhelming demands, the medical personnel remain humane and compassionate.

Highly recommended, but be ready for brutal, detailed descriptions.

---

## Eric\_W says

The "mission of the Army Medical Corps is to support the fighting strength not deplete it." This was the stark reality face by doctors and surgeons who performed heroically to save lives and who, naturally, were reluctant to see all their efforts destroyed, especially in cases where the soldier might only have days or a couple of weeks before his time in Nam was up. Vietnam was a war of limits, some areas were off limits to bombing, soldiers were limited to a year "in country."

Glasner was a pediatrician sent to Japan to care for the children of officers stationed there. Because of the enormous demands placed on the medical service and the huge number of casualties, he was ordered to work in the hospitals where the wounded were sent. This book recounts episodes in the combat lives of those soldiers.

It was a war of numbers. 365. The magic number. Body counts, the only thing that mattered. Some units would count and then bury their enemy dead on the way in so they could dig them up and count them again on the way back out. Commanders would assign quotas and if a squad didn't meet its quota, they'd have to go out again until they met it.

The book consists of a mind-numbing series of stories -- sketches, he calls them - from the battlefield and hospital interspersed with medical reports of excruciating injuries, their treatment, successes and failures. All the stories are true, either witnessed first hand by the author or retold from incidents related to him by soldiers at the hospital.

An excerpt: "The next morning the two platoons were flown back to the rest of their company. That first night back, they were hit again --two mortar rounds. The next day on patrol near the village, the slack stepped on a buried 50-caliber bullet, driving it down on a nail and blowing off the front part of his foot. When the medic rushed to help, he tripped a pull-release bouncing betty, blowing the explosive charge up into the air. It went off behind him, the explosion and shrapnel pitching him forward on to his face. Some of the white hot metal, blowing backwards, caught the trooper coming up behind him." This kind of incessant trauma finally caught up with the men and one finally snapped. He charged the village, which most assumed was harboring VC, shooting a retreating two men and a girl. Both were shot by the furious troopers. "They stripped the girl, cut off her nose and ears, and left her there with the other two for the villagers."

With this kind of pressure, it's no wonder, many men just broke and became catatonic or paralyzed. They were shipped to the hospital and Glasser describes with some awe the "new psychiatry," a process by which the army snapped them out of it and made sure they were returned to duty as soon as possible. In WW II 25% of those evacuated from a combat area was done so for neuropsychiatric reasons. In WW I it was called shell shock and the assumption was that soldiers had been too close to a shell when it went off causing some kind of brain trauma. The army could not tolerate the losses from psychiatric problems. They discovered if you change the expectations, no longer consider someone mentally ill, but expect him to return to his unit, to walk, to perform his normal duties, to not forget he is in the army. Evacuation from the front was not helping, it was making things worse; they discovered "that it was best to treat these boys as far forward as possible; that their unit identification should be maintained and, above all else, the treatment should always include the unwavering expectation, no matter how disabling the symptoms, that these boys would be returned to duty as soon as possible."

The army had to learn how to deal with racial issues as well. In one case a black soldier, a medic, had been rotated back to base where he went nuts, attacking several superior officers. He was sent to the hospital in a strait jacket. When the CID folks came to investigate, the psychiatrist told him, "the Army made a bad mistake with him. They made him a medic, gave him respect and an important job, and then rotated him back to base camp where he was harassed, abused, given menial jobs, treated like a stupid nigger, and told to mind his own business."

The new psychiatry worked, but it did nothing about the war in which 11,000 wounded were sent for repair each month, with hundreds killed. And, of course, there was no follow-up to see what happened to those who returned to duty down the road.

Extraordinary read.

---

### **Yolandi Bosch says**

Very well written but absolutely brutal and heart wrenching to read. It's absolutely horrifying to think about the young men(boys) who went to Vietnam on a kill or be killed basis.

And the hospital stories was so sad, reading about victims with pieces of shrapnel stuck in their bodies or limbs being blown off paints a vivid picture in your head and I'm sure still doesn't come close to the real tragedy of what these people went through.

---

### **Sam Reaves says**

Vietnam stories from a doctor who served at an army hospital in Japan. Some are his first-person account; stories from the field are evidently re-created from accounts he was given by patients. None of it is very pleasant. War tears people up.

---

### **Leah says**

*"Doc," David gasped. "Take me home, too...please, Doc...I don't want to go home alone."*

### **TK421 says**

Like most Vietnam memoirs or depictions, the graphic nature of the subject content can often become overwhelming, even numbing. Exploded or bullet ridden bodies soon become tiresome, or, worse, cliché. Few Vietnam books try to turn from the violence and center the narrative upon the psychological and spiritual aspect of the young men fighting in a war that most of them didn't understand or agree with in the first place. But what if a combat medic tells his account of what it was like for 365 days? At first, I thought this was going to be the same formula: battle + carnage + aftermath = memory...repeat ad infinitum. But Glasser's 365 DAYS is more than just a list of horrific events; it is an insight into what transformations he underwent as a combat medic in a war that was very unpopular with both the soldiers and the citizenry of that foreign land along with the folks back home represented in the Stars and Stripes on his sleeve. Yes, there are many gruesome accounts (he was a combat medic, afterall), but there are also accounts of what he saw, experienced, and thought about outside his black hole world of war.

This is a riveting account of one man's journey in a land that he was held voluntarily captive in for 365 days, or until he, too, would be sent home maimed or in a black bag in a nondescript coffin.

**HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**

---

### **Michael says**

Absolutely the best book about Viet Nam I have ever read. I was in Sweden waiting for a train in the morning when I started 365 Days. The book was so riveting that I read it straight through at the train station and never got on the train. I finished it as the sun went down and just returned to my campsite to catch a train the following morning.

---

### **Robert Schultz says**

#### **Good Read**

Having been a paramedic in civilian life I found the book to be informative and real. The author accurately portrayed war at it's worst and best. The brutal ness of this war and the political unrest of the time hits home with the manner in which these soldiers were treated. The author delivers on all these points and more.

---

### **Larry Scroggs says**

**Tells it like it is.**

Written by an Army combat doctor. Honestly describes the all too real results of combat. Young men are

taught to be brave heroes in training but not how to deal with being horribly wounded.

---

### **James says**

Heartbreaking, like a lot of the best military memoirs. Dr. Glasser worked as a doctor in an evacuation hospital in Japan during the Vietnam war, treating a constant stream of wounded troops - many went on to the States for more long-term treatment, many were returned to combat in Vietnam, many died.

The book is a series of stories of patients and their doctors, along with reflections on the function of the military medical system, to conserve the resource that is made up of human beings and send as many of them back to 'useful' roles in combat as possible, as quickly as possible.

He documents the finding that when traumatized soldiers and Marines are treated as close to combat as possible, with the preservation of their unit identity and the expectation that they will go back to fight with their units, many more of them do seem to shrug off the symptoms of PTSD and go back to serve. The problem with this, as he notes in his later book "Broken Bodies, Shattered Minds: A Medical Odyssey From Vietnam to Afghanistan", the people who made that determination stopped there and didn't research long-term effects, either in later combat service or after war. As we've learned since, for many the damage lasts a lifetime and affects the lives of the veterans' families for generations.

This book made my chest ache, literally.

---

### **Kevin Ryan says**

The author brings the Vietnam War to life in the most intense and horrific way.

In this book we find not only graphic descriptions of the injuries and psychological impact that combat had on the soldiers involved. Ronald J. Glasser gives insight into how injuries differ in conflicts over time and how their treatment has evolved. The book also touches on racial prejudice and how self worth affects the the capacity of soldiers to perform on the battlefield.

These soldiers were fighting the first of the modern wars. A conflict in which they were fighting an enemy they often could not see and entering villages where they had no idea whether the inhabitants were friend or foe.

The more I read 1st hand accounts of the Vietnam War the more I am in awe of the bravery and heroism manifest in these young soldiers and medics.

The content of the final chapter will remain with me for a long time.

An excellent book about the Vietnam Conflict, right up there with Dispatches.

---

### **Matt says**

Overall I enjoyed this book. I learned a lot of facts and terms about Vietnam that I never knew. I have a special interest in Vietnam since my father and father-in-law both served in that war. I also found interest in the medical shade of the book. I did not enjoy the cursing in the book, but I know some would say that "comes with the territory" of war. I am happy that I read this book in less then 10 days!

---

## **Jennifer says**

Really skillful book, very compelling. Each chapter takes a different perspective - e.g., medic, pilot, etc. I've read a ton of Vietnam books and this is at the top of my list.

---

## **Iain says**

365 Days is a book about the Vietnam War written by one of its doctors. Dr. Ronald J. Glasser was assigned to Zama, an Army hospital in Japan, he arrived there in September 1968 as a paediatrician in the U.S. Army Medical Corps, primarily to care for the children of officers and high-ranking government officials. But with an average of six to eight thousand wounded per month, Glasser, along with all other available physicians, was called on to treat the soldiers. In the preface of 365 Days he writes, "The stories I have tried to tell here are true. Those that happened in Japan I was part of; the rest are from the boys I met. I would have liked to have disbelieved some of them, and at first I did, but I was there long enough to hear the same stories again and again, and then to see part of it myself." This short book is full of harrowing and gripping stories from the moments the soldiers are horrendously injured in combat to their medevac to landing in Japan. Dr. Glasser treats hundreds of boys (18-19) and listens to their tales of woe.

The fact that the death that surrounded him was so young and until wounded so healthy he writes about accepting death... "In the solitude of death, the young child or the mature adult can turn to another for comfort without feeling childish or dependent. The newly emancipated, self-sufficient young adult may have too much personal pride to allow himself to accept the support and the understanding he so desperately needs as he moves toward death."

Dealing with the psychology of the Vietnam War is frightening and interesting...

"Label a soldier as mentally ill, support that illness, show him that it is what interests you about him, and he will be ill and stay ill. Expectation, gentlemen, expectation."

"In Nam the psychiatric patients go back to duty. One hundred percent of the combat exhaustion, 90 percent of the character-behavior disorders, 98 percent of the alcoholic and drug problems, 56 percent of the psychosis, 85 percent of the psychoneurosis, 90 percent of the acute situation reaction—they all go back with an operation diagnosis on their record of acute situation reaction. No ominous-sounding names to disturb the patients or their units. It works. The men are not lost to the fight, and the terrifying stupidity of war is not allowed to go on crippling forever. At least, that's the official belief. But there is no medical or psychiatric follow-up on the boys after they've returned to duty. No one knows if they are the ones who die in the very next fire fight, who miss the wire stretched out across the tract, or gun down unarmed civilians. Apparently, the Army doesn't seem to want to find out."

And then there is the soldier David in the burns unit...

An excellent Vietnam War book of personal testament and documentation of the young men wounded in combat.

---

**Anne E. Floyd says**

**Amazing book**

I was unable and unwilling to put this book down and was sorry when I finished it. All the mind-numbing stupidity of the authorities in charge of this travesty; all the senseless waste of lives and fortune riled me up yet again. At least in our present wars we no longer blame the soldiers like we did the Vietnam vets - something has been learned, anyway.

---