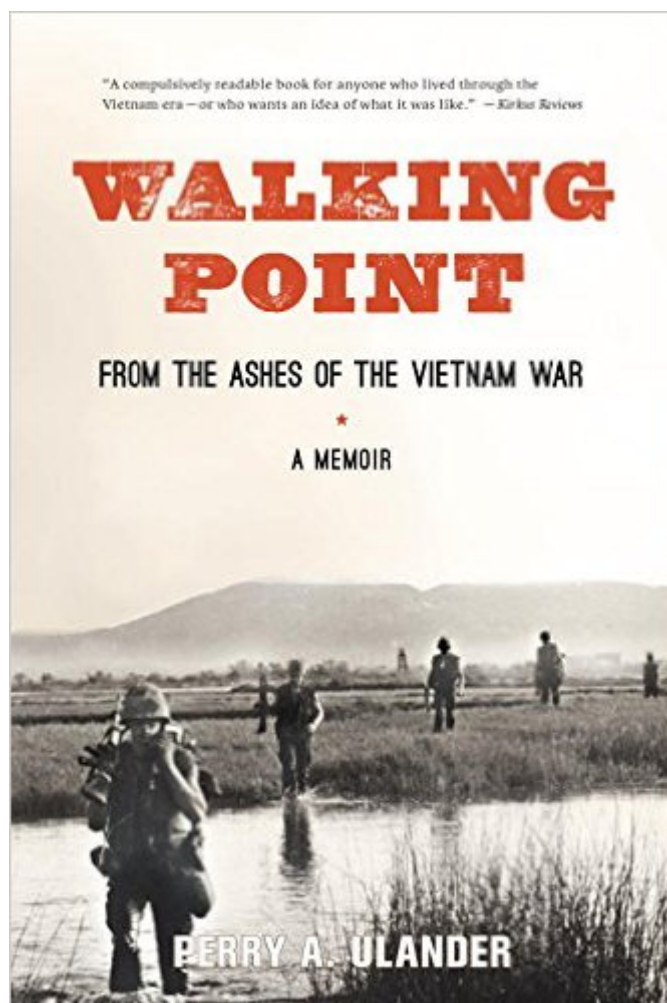


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Walking Point: From The Ashes Of The Vietnam War



Synopsis

In this intimate memoir, Perry A. Ulander chronicles with powerful clarity the bewildering predicament he confronted and the fellowship and guidance that transformed him during the year he served as an American GI in the jungles of Vietnam. Conveying with unadorned precision the harrowing experiences that shatter his core beliefs, Ulander also captures the camaraderie and humor of his platoon, the hostility between "lifers" and draftees, the physical hardships of reconnaissance missions, and the unrelenting apprehension underlying everyday life. Ultimately, he describes the surrendering of social norms and accepted identities that allows him to glimpse a previously unimagined realm of heightened awareness. • Written after a lifetime of reflection on the nature of war and the effect of violence and domination on the minds and spirits of those forced to practice it, *Walking Point* offers a powerful narrative for readers with an interest in the effects of war and violence, American involvement in Vietnam, PTSD, and how trauma can be a catalyst for spiritual transformation. Giving voice to profound insights gained through extreme adversity, Ulander movingly captures the depth of trust and commitment among a group of unwitting warriors who struggle to stay alive and sane in uncharted territory. • Contents CHAPTER 1: Into the Unknown CHAPTER 2: The Magic Poncho Liner CHAPTER 3: Initiation CHAPTER 4: Head On CHAPTER 5: The Valley of the Shadow CHAPTER 6: Into the Light CHAPTER 7: Short Time • CHAPTER 8: No Time • CHAPTER 9: Home

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I still have my â€œmagicâ€• poncho liner today (with newer versions, yet still the green ones, provided by those Army surplus stores, and not the beige â€œdesertâ€• ones), still go camping, and would never go camping without it. Perry A. Ulander sprinkles his account of his year in Vietnam with some popular music lyrics from the â€ˆ60â€™s. For me, the green poncho liner was always intertwined around a line from the Mamaâ€™s and the Papaâ€™s â€œCalifornia Dreaminâ€™â€•: â€œâ€¦ Iâ€™ll be safe and warmâ€¦ when I am in L.A.â€¦â€• Ulander relates the advice of an â€œold-timer,â€• the busted former Green Beret, â€œCaptain Speedâ€• who told him when he was a â€œnewbieâ€•: â€œMost people donâ€™t know this, but these poncho liners are bug-proof, snake-proof and bullet-proof.â€• Ulander goes on: â€œWhat Speed was saying was that here in the Central Highlands, in Charlesâ€™ land, there were two ways to retire at night. You could be anxious and fearful about your throat being slit or a mortar round landing on your head, or you could retreat into the warm womb of your magic poncho liner and feel secure that you would get a deep, revitalizing nightâ€™s sleep.â€• Ulander was drafted, became an 11 Bravo, Infantry, and spent a year in Vietnam, commencing in December, 1969, with the 173rd Airborne Brigade, when they operated out of LZ Uplift, in northern Binh Dinh province. He should be â€œdraftedâ€• again, by the Army War College in Carlisle, PA, so that he could teach a course. Remember the â€œDoctrine of Vertical Envelopmentâ€™? Few do today, and Ulander never specifically mentions it, but he does provide a fair description of the classic â€œhammer and anvilâ€• tactic, whereby his unit was serving as a â€œblocking forceâ€• while other elements were doing the sweeping.

A novel of transformation; not only of the young men sent into war, but of a nation in an ongoing transformation as well. What really juiced my hot-button in my reading was: the point-of-view writing from a somewhat naïve young man, Perry Ulander; the narrative starts as Perry is undergoing basic training; identifying, reliving, and experiencing those by-gone days[in basically the same time period of the novel]; and especially the authenticity within the pages of the storyline. A transformation were the young men dreaming of coming home; will not be returning to the same home because he will have changed and so will have those he or she loves. The basic title of the novel walking point, exemplifies a kill or be killed position. The platoon's very survival depended upon the point man's skill, and that he would rather sacrifice himself and his personal future hand give the impossible task to someone else. This title juxtaposes the grunt soldier's skill and sacrifice against those of the selfish, ambitious leaders at home and those calling the shots on-the-ground at the safe-havens of rear-echelon's of command/subjected to the ignorance of command. Again, with hind-sight and further readers since 1969 I've come to relive those experiences within an differently

framed perspective. For example, in the story/60 percent of the company was getting high with regularity. If the army suddenly decided to bust people, they'd have a mutiny on their hands. Besides, the big brass didn't want to admit that there might be a problem.

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