



# In Your Voice

Issue 1: November 2014

[www.theredbadgeproject.org](http://www.theredbadgeproject.org)

## Red Badge Project: Women's Voices

With the success of our "In Your Voice" class at the VA, The Red Badge was asked to implement a course specifically for our women veterans. "Women's Voices" is lead by noted author Sonya Lea, and dedicated to supporting the development of women's stories, in their own voices.

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## Inspiring Others



In partnership with Walla Walla community leaders, The Red Badge Project is supporting local efforts to support the estimated 20,000 veterans in their community.

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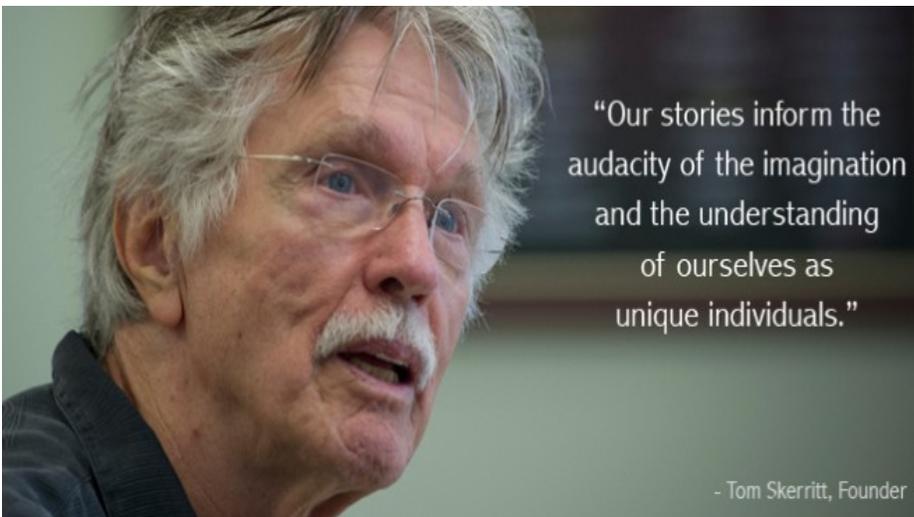
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## Telling Their Story "In Their Voice."

In Focus featured The Red Badge Project on KCTB Channel 9 as part of Veterans Day Tribute.

Watch these powerful interviews on our website;

<http://theredbadgeproject.org/news>



"Our stories inform the audacity of the imagination and the understanding of ourselves as unique individuals."

- Tom Skerritt, Founder

## Storytelling: The power to teach, heal and connect.

The arts of war and story telling were inextricably intertwined from moment the first warrior recounted his or her battle experience. Through story, song and visual depiction, warriors have shared the lessons (good and bad) of the battlefield. They recounted their stories, in their voice. They were listened to and more; they were heard.

Through this ancient process, came healing, acceptance and acknowledgement of deeds witnessed and done. Lessons were learned and passed on to the betterment of all: lessons taken into account by each new generation.

For no man or woman, who faces the battlefield and/or its aftermath is unchanged. It is human. So too, is the need to express the emotional impact of the physical acts of battle, the images seared into the brain, the memories and senses that constantly return. Without a means of release, they remain forever trapped, internal prisoners struggling to break free. It is a never-ending battle within.

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The Red Badge Project is a 501C3 Non-Profit

## Women's Voices, con't.

With Sonya's guidance, The Red Badge Project's Women's Voices explores the question of, "How might we transform our life's memories into art?" In this generative workshop series, participants follow their own desire for the story that they, as women might write, in a safe environment oriented to our own inclinations, subjects, and craft. Introduced are women's stories, ones that avoid the tropes of masculine action.



*"The most important story I've ever written is one that I lived when my husband experienced a brain injury and lost the memories of our life."*

Sonja Lea

Womens' Voices, encourages our female veterans to read, study, and tell women's stories in their own voices because they are the way to define and claim a self. Participants are supported in their journey to create ways to stay open to the possibility that the act of writing might fundamentally change us.

Sonya Lea's memoir, *Wondering Who You Are*, (Tin House Books, 2015) is about her husband losing the memory of their life. She has written for Salon, The Southern Review, Cold Mountain Review, Brevity, Tricycle, and a college text, The Prentice Hall Reader.

Sonya teaches writing in the USA and Canada, including creating programs for people to generate their own personal stories and memoirs. Sonya is also a Nicholl Fellowship finalist in screenwriting, and writes and directs films.

## Storytelling con't....

The Red Badge Project provides freedom for the trapped stories and emotions that so damage the emotional wellbeing of returning Warriors. Our Band of Storytellers, comprised of teachers, writers, actors, photographers and retired military, support active duty and veteran warriors in their search to find the ways and means to free the story within and have its lessons born witness by those beyond: family, community and workplace.

This is the work of The Red Badge Project, to teach, to listen and free each warrior's stories, so minds may find peace as participants come to terms with their experiences. As they express their story, in their voice, they return to family and society, with a renewed sense of self-efficacy, self-worth and hope for their futures.

As we pause on Veterans Day to say thanks to vets and recognize, appreciate their stories, lets remember that we must go one step further in supporting them in their time of need, beyond this day, as they fight to find a bright future and place in our community.

Tom Skerritt, Founder and Evan Bailey, Co-founder

## Inspiring Others, con't.

The Red Badge team reached out to the community of Walla Walla this past August. In coordination with local VA facilities, colleges, Rotary, Chamber of Commerce and The Red Badge Project, Walla Walla veterans now participate in weekly seminars at the City Library. The majority of the veterans there are from the Vietnam era, and this is the first time they have had the opportunity to benefit from a program like ours. Too long have their stories been locked within, and we are proud to help them find their voice. The pilot class graduates this Wednesday and the next is already booked!



Photo by Michael

For more information visit our website: [www.theredbadgeproject.org](http://www.theredbadgeproject.org) or contact: Evan Bailey, Co-Founder  
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