

PHOTOS FROM THE FRONT LINES

A YEAR ON THE STREETS OF ALAMEDA COUNTY



WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY DEREK O. HANLEY

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Special thanks to all the medics who agreed to be featured.

May you be honored and your courage not go unrecognized.

★★★★★

"This book pays tribute to the crews' sacrifices and also documents the pandemic year, social unrest and the disasters that ravaged the region through the prism of the paramedics' experiences. Real journalism."

- Matt Jaffe, SF Chronicle

★★★★★

"Join long-time paramedic and disabled veteran combat medic Derek O. Hanley on the front lines of the chaotic, dangerous, and fraught year of 2020 on the streets of Alameda, California. This excellent work is one book you just can't put down. It's a hefty coffee table book, though the emotional heft it brings far exceeds the physical weight of the tome. Printed on high-quality paper, every page is a vignette into the horrors, tedium, shock, and occasional humor of serving the public's emergency health needs during a time of extended crisis. We cannot thank our emergency medical professionals nearly enough, and this book is an excellent start to raising awareness of that fact.

Hanley's talent as a photographer--and his humanity--makes it very much worth your time."

- J. Alex Greenwood, host of the Mysterious Goings On podcast

★★★★★

"Photos from the Front Lines is a gritty, inside-the-action look at an unforgettable time that many would like to forget. This is a worthy addition to any EMS library, whether at work or at home."

- James Careless, writer with EMS World magazine

★★★★★

"We're grateful you were there to create something, not just for people to understand better, but a historical document."

- Patti Vasquez, Radio host WCPT Chicago

★★★★★

"He's done a book that should be a coffee table book in homes and offices, it's something somebody is going to pick up and be moved by. This is the one!"

- Bill Brady, Host of The Bill Brady Show KFNX Phoenix

★★★★★

"The PTSD, the challenges, before COVID...thank you (medics) for your service in this area because you all are underpaid, you're the ones who are always there when it's the biggest emergencies possible, the biggest traumas. You're guaranteed, if you become a paramedic, you're going to have trauma every day, and people don't see that, they don't value you all enough to put you on a pedestal. Every medic in the world needs to have this book just to say 'thank you' for highlighting them."

- Neil Haley, Host of the Neil Haley Show

★★★★★

"A paramedic turned photographer, whose new book gives us a look inside the COVID-19 pandemic."

- Kara Mack, Host of Afternoon Live ABC KATU

★★★★★

"Fantastic book, I hope it sells a million copies!"

- Matt Gurney, Radio host Sirius XM Canada Talks

★★★★★

"We absolutely need to remember what is happening on the front lines, and that is documented so nicely in Photos From the Front Lines."

- Paul Miller, Paul Miller Morning Show, WPHM Michigan

★★★★★

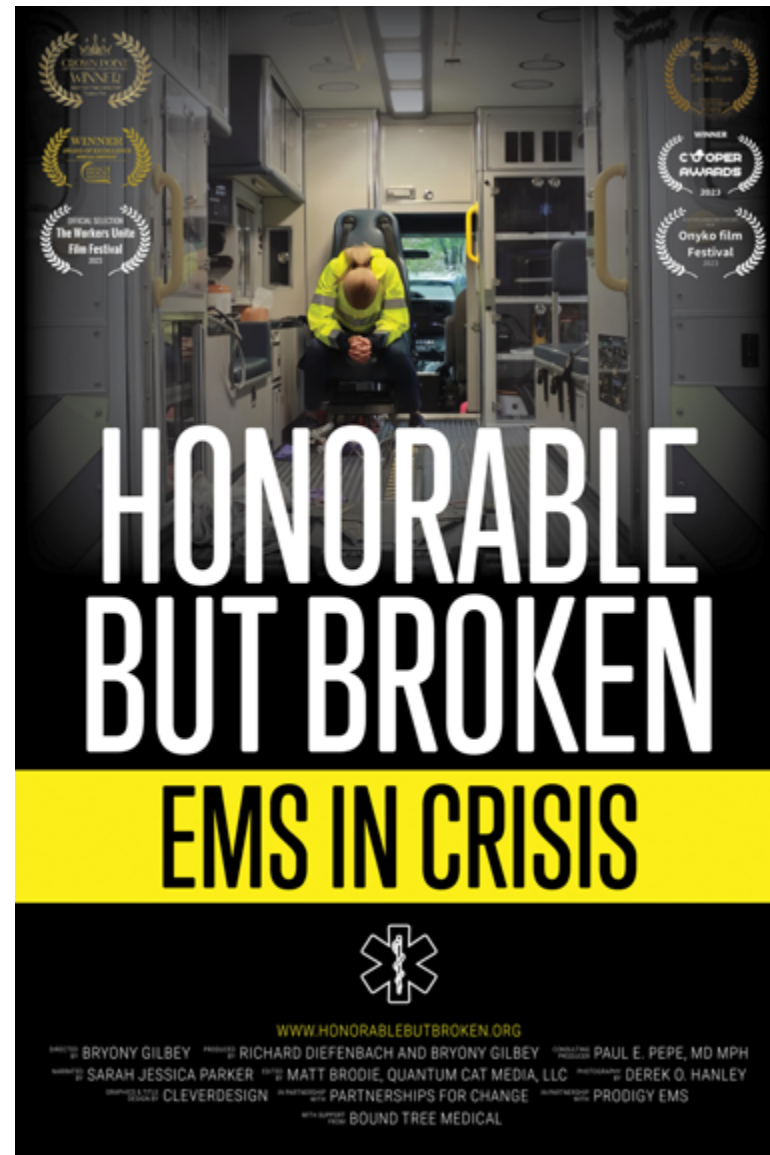
"He was actually embedded with ambulance crews and then the pandemic hit, and his goal became to document the day-by-day lifesaving of first responder front line workers during these tragic days. Now you can experience what it was like in his beautiful book."

- Mary Jane Popp, Radio host KAHJ Sacramento

★★★★★

"It's an important issue, and I'm glad you're lending your voice."

- Hanah Olsen, Host of Afternoon Live ABC KATU



Images from Photos From the Front Lines: A Year On the Streets of Alameda County are featured in the documentary film *Honorable But Broken: EMS In Crisis* narrated by six-time Golden Globe and two-time Primetime Emmy award winning actress Sarah Jessica Parker.
HonorableButBroken.org



Derek O. Hanley is a former military medic, paramedic, educator, and documentary photographer. His photography is rooted in firsthand experience working in the environments he documents.

Over the course of his career, Hanley has embedded with frontline healthcare providers, first responders, and public safety professionals to create an enduring visual record of their work. His images have been featured in books, films, news media, and public discussions surrounding emergency medicine and healthcare.

Intro from the photographer

These photos were taken over the course of one of the most tumultuous years in recent collective memory: 2020, which saw everything from a global pandemic to protests and rioting to wildfires and mass vaccinations. I embedded with ambulance crews and supervisors from Falck Alameda County ambulance in California and sought to capture some of the more poignant and personal moments in the field during this time. The use of military vernacular is purposeful, with the intention of tying two professions together conceptually in people's minds: military and medics. This year, the term "front line" became associated with personnel who were putting their lives on the line every day during the global COVID-19 pandemic, and medics were at the absolute forefront of this fight. This was on top of the exposure to horrific trauma those in this job are faced with under ordinary circumstances. I am of the opinion that medics should be thanked for their service, honored, and taken care of by society, like we do for those who have risked their lives and served our country in the military.

#thankmedicsfortheirservice

February 2020

Jim & Gina | Livermore

This first vignette features paramedic Jim and EMT Gina. This wasn't the first time I was embedded in the field this year, but it was the first time I had brought my camera with the intent to document the day. Jim wasn't expecting a ride-along, so he was a bit gruff with me when I showed up. After hearing me talk about my time in the military as a medic and enjoying my gift of made-from-scratch cookies, the crew came to take great care of me, and we had some great conversations and interesting calls that day. As Gina aptly put it: "Everyone we responded to needed us today," as opposed to people calling for an ambulance who don't really need it, which can be frustrating for highly trained medics. Here, Jim, who has been a paramedic for many years, performs an assessment on an elderly trauma patient in the street.





We received a call for an emergency at the Oakland International Airport. You never know where you'll end up in this job.



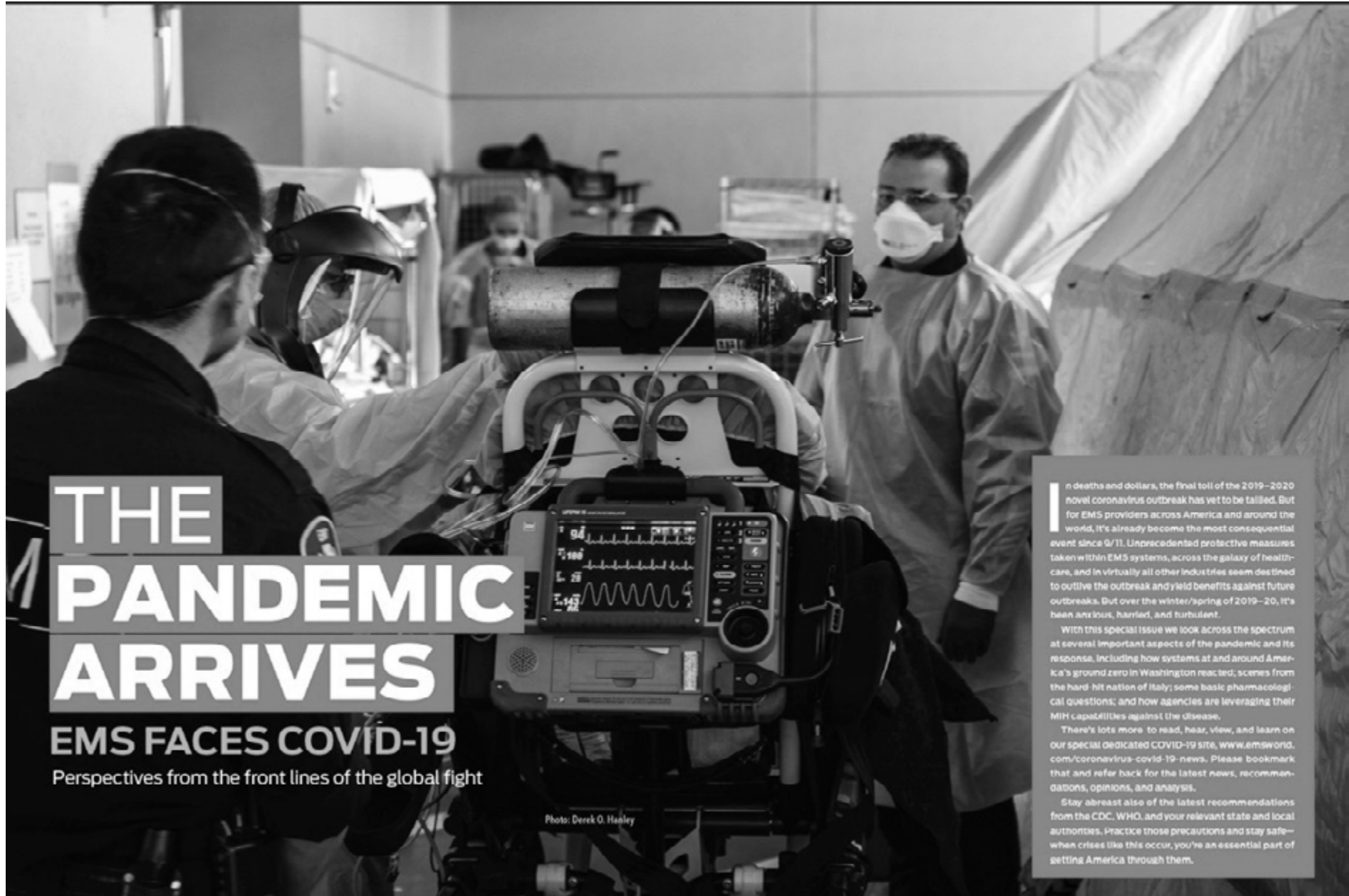
The patient ended up being stable and refused transport. The medics head back out to the flight line to load up the stretcher.



There was panic buying of essential goods, most notably toilet paper and other paper products.



Everything went to video conferencing: birthdays, holidays, dinner parties, happy hours, and, for the unfortunate ones, even funerals.



A nurse checks to see if the patient has a fever. This photo was selected for the center spread of EMS World magazine's May 2020 COVID-19 issue.



A nurse administers a COVID-19 nasal swab outside of the outbreak tent.



We arrive at the scene of a truck rollover on an exit ramp of the highway—apparently a spot where this type of accident happens frequently.



Firefighters from the Livermore Pleasanton Fire Department stabilize the vehicle and ready extrication tools.



Captain Serena



Paramedic Courtney

May 2020

Fleet Maintenance | Headquarters

The mechanics keep the wheels turning and the medics safe. They deserve appreciation for what they do as well, as this is also a thankless job that could not be performed remotely when the pandemic struck. With all the wear and tear an ambulance experiences, these folks are busy trying to keep things running smoothly. There is a saying in the military: "What can fail, will fail." There are a lot of moving parts and electronics on an ambulance, and without the mechanics, the fleet would grind to a halt or otherwise be unable to care for and transport patients. There are a lot of people behind the scenes of the emergency medical services, and fleet maintenance is one of the most crucial and underrecognized pieces.





Mechanic Isaac





Commander Heidi corralling the team for the group photos



The TEMS team in full kit

May 2020

George Floyd Protest | Oakland

These photos were taken on Friday, May 29, 2020, the night of the major George Floyd protest in downtown Oakland. This was the night when two federal security officers were gunned down by people in a van that drove by, unrelated to the protest. I was embedded with the TEMS team leader, Commander Heidi, and documented the evening's events from the perspective of the medics. For full coverage of this night, look for my book *Behind the Skirmish Line* at dohp.net/books.



When I arrived, these were the first few protesters.
By the end of the night, the crowd would swell to more than 7,500.



Tear gas was released, and chaos ensued. In the foreground, paramedic Chris moves toward someone down.



Police forces push the skirmish line out from OPD headquarters. Soon after, there were reports of fires and looting across the city.



EMT Jay gets to work his first shift as a 911 EMT with his dad, paramedic Ray, who has been working for decades in the county.





We responded to a vehicle fire in the Oakland hills.



December 2020

COVID-19 Vaccine Arrives | Hayward

In a testament to human ingenuity and hard work, the first vaccines arrived in the Bay Area less than a year after the first case was reported in the country. In a rare acknowledgment of their importance, first responders were some of the first individuals to be prioritized to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. This point of distribution (POD) was set up at a hospital in Hayward, and first responders from all around the county were showing up to get their first shot. I was also able to get my first shot in December, which took a huge weight off my shoulders, as I was more worried about getting my wife or others I know sick than about getting ill myself. I remember feeling much gratitude for all who made it possible for shots to be going in arms.





Division Chief Torres smiling for the camera



Your humble author receiving his first shot

February 2021

Mass Vaccination Site | Oakland

The regional mass vaccination site was set up at the Oakland Coliseum, where the Oakland A's and the Golden State Warriors usually play. This marked the beginning of the end of the initial wave of the pandemic and felt like a turning point, at least for the first responders. Falck Alameda County was tasked with standing watch over the site in case there were any untoward reactions or other medical emergencies. There were people from FEMA, the US military, the National Parks Service, CAL FIRE, and many other agencies contributing to the vaccination effort. It was amazing to witness so much effort and cooperation going into trying to help as many people as possible. While we train for things like this, seeing it in practice is another thing entirely, and there will be many lessons learned from this.





A vaccine is ready to be administered.



A shot of the waiting area with the BART train and the Oakland hills in the background

To medics everywhere,
thank you for your service.

If you enjoyed this book, please tell your friends, share on social media,
and leave a positive review on Goodreads.com, Amazon.com, and/or at DOHP.net/books
Huge thanks to all the medics who agreed to be featured in this work.
#thankmedicsfortheirservice

PHOTOS FROM THE FRONT LINES follows medics from Falck Alameda County ambulance during one of the most tumultuous years in recent collective memory: 2020.

From a global pandemic to demonstrations and looting to wildfires and mass vaccinations, PHOTOS FROM THE FRONT LINES provides comprehensive insider coverage of this year and beyond from the perspective of those on the front lines every day of the crisis.

To learn more go to DOHP.net/books or scan the QR below.

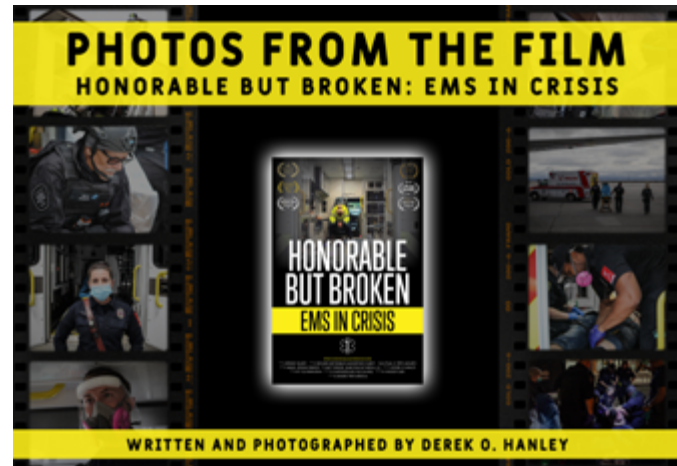
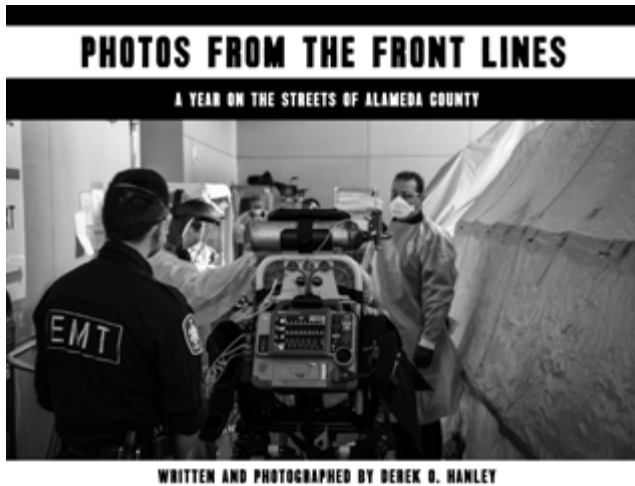
★★★★★

"Photos From the Front Lines and Behind the Skirmish Line provide a realism that brings the viewer into the world of EMS and the prehospital medicine experience like nothing else. TV and movies sensationalize the profession but these books tell a story and reality only like single photos are capable of delivering. Mr. Hanley's eye for detail and the beauty of the black and white photos (to me) brings back memories of experiences throughout my career as a paramedic."
- Dr. Edward "Ted" Lee, Editor-In-Chief, Journal of Emergency Medical Services (JEMS)

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