

Secrets
Of
Successful
Writers

Secrets of Successful Writers
Darrell Pitt
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I am the author of the young adult novels, "The Steampunk Detective", "The Last Days of Earth" and "Diary of a Teenage Superhero". I also interview authors and blog about life, the universe and everything else on my site www.darrellpitt.com

This is what just a few people have had to say about my novels:

...an entertaining read that flies by, filled with action and intrigue.

Mena Grazie

I loved this book! The author has created engaging characters and the pace of this adventure is spot on. I could not stop reading...

Anonomous

Without a doubt this was the best dollar I have ever spent! I could not put it down and was starting to get behind on things I should have been doing. Thank you for the wonderful adventure.

Curtis McCully

I love to hear from my readers, so please make contact with me by:

Email: darrellpitt@gmail.com

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/darrellpitt>

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Dedicated

To the Forty-Nine Kent Street Gang

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A Few Final Words

Welcome to Secrets of Successful Writers!

It's an exciting time to be a writer.

We now live in an era where writers can both create and publish their own work and make a living out of doing what they love.

Contained within *Secrets of Successful Writers* are interviews I conducted with fifty authors. They talk about their writing, how they became published authors and how they market themselves in this brave new era of ebooks. These interviews came about as a result of a series of interviews I conducted on my website www.darrellpitt.com

Some of the writers contained within are traditional writers, having built their careers by seeking an agent and a publisher before finally seeing their books in print in the bookshops. Others are building successful careers as self-published ebook authors. One of the most famous of these is John Locke, the first self published ebook author to sell a million copies of his novels.

And he did it in only five months.

They are all writers. None of them will tell you it's an easy path (what worthwhile things in life are easy), but within this book they offer tips and techniques on what has worked for them – and what has not.

I believe this book will save you both time and money. I'm sure it will most certainly give you a clearer indication of how to set your sail and adjust your rudder to achieve your writing goals.

It has been said that there are as many different types of writers as there are writers. That is certainly true of the writers contained within this book. There is Micaela Wendell who was thirteen when she wrote the first draft of her book *The Branding*. There is Dolores Durando who wrote and published her first book when she turned ninety.

That's right. Ninety.

You will find authors who write detective stories, westerns, romance, thrillers and children's books. Some of them are writing genre fiction in areas you would not have thought possible.

There are writers who have written one novel. There is the amazing Robert J Randisi who has written over five hundred of them (amazing, but true).

As a writer myself, I have certainly experienced the pain of trying to build a writing career. I have written stories that I have had repeatedly rejected. I have had crushing, soul destroying critiques that have emotionally flattened me.

Still, I have picked myself up, dusted myself off and continued forward, reminding myself that this is what writers face all the time. It can be a tough business, but all businesses are tough in their own ways.

There is a lot of information contained within *Secrets of Successful Writers*. I urge you to read it, re-read it and talk to your writer friends about it.

Sometimes a piece of advice you skimmed over will suddenly jump out at you when you look at it again six months later. I am serious about this. Suddenly the importance of a single line will make a synapse fire in your brain and you will shake your head and wonder why you didn't realise its importance in the first place.

Most of all, it's important to realise you are not alone in your writing endeavours. Other writers have faced the same difficulties you are facing. Others have walked the same path. If you follow their trail you may find it takes you to your destination.

In the meantime, keep writing.

Darrell Pitt.

Robert J Randisi – Author of 500 Novels. Believe it or Not!

Robert J Randisi has been called many things. He has been described as “the last of the great pulp writers”, he has been called “a living legend” and he has been called “the world's biggest private eye nut.”

Whatever words you use to describe him, it would be accurate to call him prolific. To date he has written, and published, over five hundred novels.

Whassat?

Yes, strange, but true. While most writers struggle to write that one book they've always wanted to write, this amazing writer has written over five hundred novels during his incredible career.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, he made his first sale at age twenty-two. He co-founded and edited Mystery Scene magazine and co-founded the American Crime Writers League. He also founded The Private Eye Writers of America in 1981 and created the Shamus Award.

Robert has written in many different genres, but most of his books have been westerns and crime stories. His adult westerns are now being distributed from Speaking Volumes LLC. They will be distributing 200 of the books from his Gunsmith series as well as all of his Angel Eyes, Tracker and Mountain Jack Pike novels. His books will be available as both POD trade paperbacks and in audio form.

Darrell - Can you describe a typical day of writing (and do you have a word limit per day)?

Robert - No word limit. I used to have a page limit of 20 a day, but that was when I was working on one book at a time. Depending on my deadline, I'll do anywhere from 10 to 40 pages a day on a book. As for a schedule, I usually wake up at 11 am, have breakfast, start writing until dinner (5, 6) then nap for two hours and write all night until 4 am or so. Then I read until 5 am and go to bed. The nap usually bridges the gap from one book to another when I'm working on two at one time.

Darrell - Do you plot a story out completely first or do you let it lead you in certain directions if the need arises?

Robert - I have never plotted a book from start to finish, and I've written and published over 500 of them. There is too much that can happen to change that, so why waste time? I usually follow the plot along with the main character, experiencing what he experiences.

Darrell - It's easy to imagine that mystery books will still be around for years to come, but do you think Western novels still have a long life ahead of them?

Robert - I do. Our history is always there, it doesn't go away. There is a dedicated western readership in this country. Sometimes they have to carry the banner alone, sometimes they get some help. But they'll always be there.

Darrell - There's often a debate about 'literary' books as opposed to 'popular' novels. Why do you think this is?

Robert - What's the debate? Which to read? Which to write? It doesn't make much difference to most readers. A book is a book. As far as writers are concerned literary books get you notice but no money, popular books get you money but no notice. The word "literary" pretty much means you're going to read a book where nothing happens.

Darrell - If you had a single piece of advice to hand to someone trying to become an author, what would it be?

Robert - Write every day, as many hours as you can. Don't worry about page count. You'll have to worry about that soon enough, when you start writing to a deadline.

Darrell - Where do you see the future for writers now that ebooks have arrived?

Robert - I'm not a big fan of e-books. I like the way real books feel and smell, too much. But a book is a book, and you'll always need a writer to produce them. E-books are threatening to publishers and book stores, but not to writers.

Important Links:

The Speaking Volumes website address is:

<http://www.speakingvolumes.us>

And Robert is contactable on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/randisi.Gunsmith>

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Heather Killough-Walden – A Passionate Story Hits Amazon’s Number One

Heather Killough-Walden is the author of some nine novels including “The Spell” which recently reached number one on the bestselling romance novels on Amazon. In this interview I asked Heather about how she became a writer, her thoughts on writing stand alone novels as opposed to writing a series of books and what she believes are the best ways a writer can promote themselves.

Darrell - What made you want to become a writer in the first place?

Heather - I suppose the writing itself is what made me become a writer. I learned to read at what is considered a very young age, and the ability to write came clinging to its coat tails. I’ve never been good at spoken communication; I get nervous, fumble over my speech, and suffer from horrible foot-in-mouth disease. As a result, I realized early on that if I wanted to communicate effectively, I would need time to think before I spoke. What gives you more time to think about what you’re going to say than writing it down? By the time you’ve put your thoughts into words, they’re more or less edited. It’s the safer bet.

But because I was quiet and preferred time to myself, I wasn’t the most popular girl in school. Hence, I used my writing as a bridge between this world and one that wasn’t quite so painful. This other world was of *my* design. I drew its landscape, colored its people, gave it depth and dimension. It was filled with beings who were larger than life and indomitable because that was what I wanted to be. They could defend themselves, stick up for others, and even defy gravity to literally leave their troubles on the ground.

I almost flunked out of high school because of this other world. Instead of paying attention in pre-calculus, I sat scrunched in my desk and furiously scribbled stories about vampire and werewolf gangs clashing on a deserted, bon-fire lit beach. I suppose that in the end, those stories did have more to do with my career choice than did exponential functions and logarithms.

Darrell - What's a typical day of writing like for you?

Heather - I wake up to writing and I fall asleep to writing. There is a quote by Eugene Ionesco that I keep on the front page of my website: “A writer never has a vacation. For a writer, life consists of either writing or thinking about writing.” That couldn’t be more true. The moment I wake up, I use mouthwash. Then, while my daughter is still asleep and before hitting breakfast or even a cup of coffee, I am at my computer, responding to personal feedback from readers.

My daughter normally wakes up somewhere in the middle of this and I rush to fix her breakfast, give her a bath, get her dressed, and prepare her for homeschooling. As she

does her assignments, I sit across from her with my laptop to get back to work on any one of the seven novels I am currently writing and on the administrative work that comes with keeping up some kind of presence in the literary world. I hit the FaceBook messages, blogs, sales copy, cover copy, synopses, edits, more edits, and so forth with all I've got.

Somewhere in there, I do the laundry, vacuum, take out the trash, clean the bathrooms, and make phone calls for doctor's appointments, hair appointments, and dental appointments. All the while, however, I'm noticing people and places and music and movement and cataloguing everything around me for use in my books. Sometimes I'm doing the cataloguing in a literal sense – writing notes in a small leather-bound notebook I carry with me everywhere I go.

Family is important (obviously), so I try my best to make time with them every night. We sit together for an hour and read from the Kindle or a paperback; Terry Pratchett, Wendy Mass, Frances Hardinge and the Monk series by Lee Goldberg are some of our favorites. But I'll be honest with you...a lot of the time, as we're reading, my thoughts are drifting to my own stories. I have always (and most likely always will) existed half in this world and half in that other. It is both an escape and an inescapable prison, perhaps gold gilded, but a prison nonetheless, and as soon as both my husband and my child are back in bed, I'm once more seated before the computer, my fingers flying across the keyboard. If not there, then I'm tucked into the couch with throws all around me like a nest, a leather journal in my lap, the quiet night air filled with the sound of my pen scratching and the next door neighbor's dog barking at god only knows what.

At some point, I fall asleep. But even in my dreams, I'm writing. Almost the entirety of *The Game* came to me in a dream, as did the lead characters in *The Patrick Sinclair Story*, *The Third Kiss*, and *Sam I Am*, along with the plot for *Hell Bent*.

And then, four or five hours later, I wake up and do it all again.

Darrell - You have a number of series for sale as well as a number of stand alone novels. Would you recommend a new writer start trying to produce a series?

Heather - I recommend that a new writer write what he or she knows and what he or she is comfortable writing. If that's a stand-alone novel, then fantastic. If it's the first novel in a series, then also fantastic – but be prepared. If the book sells well, it means you actually have to write the next books in the series. There's no going back.

Writers have to stick with what they know and what they are passionate about. Whether this turns out to be a paranormal romance series or a single thriller, if it is filled with passion and knowledge, it will be wonderful and people will read it.

Darrell - What do you think are the best ways for a writer to promote themselves?

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