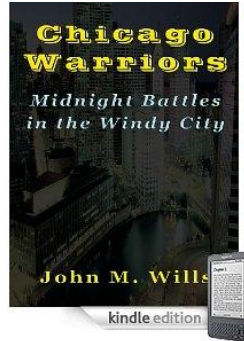


TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2010

Kindle Author Interview: John M. Wills



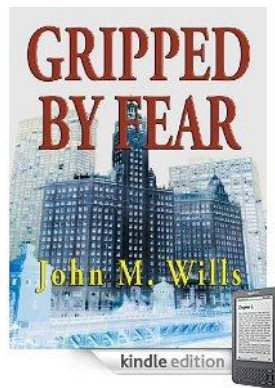
John M. Wills, author of The Chicago Warriors Thriller Series, discusses his books, his journey as a writer, and publishing on Kindle.

DAVID WISEHART: What can you tell us about The Chicago Warriors Thriller Series?

JOHN M. WILLS: I created The Chicago Warriors Thriller Series when I had my first novel published: [Chicago Warriors: Midnight Battles in the Windy City](#). *Midnight Battles* introduces my two protagonists, Chicago Police Officers Pete Shannon and Marilyn Benson. We find these two street cops working a beat together on the midnight shift, patrolling the mean streets of Chicago. In the second book of the series, [Gripped by Fear](#), Shannon and Benson have been promoted to detective, and are assigned to track down a psycho-rapist who is preying on cleaning ladies in downtown Chicago. The third book, *Targeted*, to be released in February 2011, involves Shannon and Benson enlisting the aid of the FBI, as they try and stop a sniper who is murdering cops. In a unique twist, another story runs in tandem with *Targeted*. It describes the story of a Catholic priest who is on the run from the law. The two unrelated stories merge in the violent finale of the book.

DAVID WISEHART: How did your career in law enforcement inform your writing of this series?

JOHN M. WILLS: My twelve years as a Chicago cop, and twenty-one as an FBI agent, fully prepared me to write the book from an experiential and technical point of view.



DAVID WISEHART: How do you create and maintain dramatic tension?

JOHN M. WILLS: I've never had a problem creating tension, whether it's a part of the main story, or dealing with my characters. I ensure that there are many serious dilemmas to solve, both in the characters' personal lives and in the cases they are working. I try to plant precursors and foreshadowings at selected places while the story develops. Some are quickly resolved, others may not be as easy, and some may be incapable of being resolved at all.

DAVID WISEHART: How do you develop and differentiate your characters?

JOHN M. WILLS: I have a vague idea of who my characters will be, except for my main protagonists, who I'm modeling after real people. I think of my story line, write a brief synopsis, then insert characters as needed. I try to use diverse people who have ambiguous backgrounds, even illegals and black marketers from foreign nations. I keep it interesting for my readers.

DAVID WISEHART: Who do you imagine is your ideal reader?

JOHN M. WILLS: Since my novels have a Christian theme running through them—one, however, that does not affect the realism or brutal nature of dealing with cretins and crime—my readers seem to include an equal number of men and women, as well as law enforcement.

DAVID WISEHART: What common misperceptions do you think people have about police work and the FBI?

JOHN M. WILLS: I don't think that many people recognize that men and women in law enforcement are a microcosm of society. They are just like you and me, have the same likes and dislikes, and share the same problems that life throws our way. The additional burden they bear is that they're expected to be role models above reproach. When law enforcement errs, it's always magnified because of who they are.

DAVID WISEHART: You review books for the *New York Journal of Books*. How does writing book reviews help you grow and develop as a novelist?

JOHN M. WILLS: I'm blessed to be able to review new novels before their release date. I read with a more discerning eye, being an author myself. I try to glean from the books the manner in which each author develops plots and characters, uses figures of speech, etc. Most of the authors I review are famous, best-selling writers. Therefore, I am learning from the masters, so to speak.

DAVID WISEHART: What was your journey as a writer?

JOHN M. WILLS: After retiring from the FBI in 2004, I began writing professionally, focusing on writing law enforcement related articles for websites and magazines. To date, I've had more than 100 articles published. However, I've always had the urge to write fiction. I have hundreds of stories bouncing inside my head from 35 years in law enforcement. I procrastinated for a while, wondering if I could master the process, and fretting that perhaps I wouldn't get it right. Finally, my wife told me to just sit down and start writing. That was all it took; I've been writing ever since.

DAVID WISEHART: What is your writing process?

JOHN M. WILLS: I write "something" each day—an article, a blog entry, or a few pages of a book. I'm in the habit of doing this each day. Once you develop the habit of writing, you've stepped over the threshold.

DAVID WISEHART: What authors most inspire you?

JOHN M. WILLS: I like Richard Paul Evans, Dean Koontz, Michael Connolly, Dan Walsh, Noah Boyd, Stieg Larsson . . . is that enough?

DAVID WISEHART: What one book, written by someone else, do you wish you'd written yourself?

JOHN M. WILLS: [The Shack](#).

DAVID WISEHART: How did you create your cover?

JOHN M. WILLS: In collaboration with my publisher, TotalRecall Press.

DAVID WISEHART: How have you marketed and promoted your work?

JOHN M. WILLS: I do virtual book tours, blog interviews, newspaper interviews, book signings at book stores, cafés, schools, and libraries. I also use Facebook and Twitter.

DAVID WISEHART: Why publish on Kindle?

JOHN M. WILLS: Why indeed. It's a force in the market. I travel all the time, and I see more and more people onboard the airlines reading on Kindles. My books are on it as well, and I've owned one for a couple of years. I love it.

DAVID WISEHART: What advice would you give to a first-time author thinking of self-publishing on Kindle?

JOHN M. WILLS: Go for it! It's the future, no doubt about it—it's not going away. On the contrary, it will evolve with the demand and technology. More importantly, the titles are cheaper than buying the physical books themselves, which means more people will have the opportunity to read your work.

DAVID WISEHART: Thanks, and best of luck with your books.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



John began writing professionally after retiring from the FBI. He has published more than 100 articles in both print media and online.

He is a former co-editor of *Suspense Thriller Zine*. John is also an award-winning author of several short stories and writes book reviews for *The New York Journal Of Books*.

His short story, "Friday the 13th," has been published in Lt. Randy Sutton's (Las Vegas Metro PD) latest book: [True Blue: To Protect and Serve](#).

John is an NCAA approved speaker explaining the dangers of steroids and other dangerous drugs to student athletes.

He is a former Chicago Police Officer, and has written three exciting police novels, part of the Chicago Warrior Thriller Series.

Visit his [website](#) and find him on [facebook](#).

Are you a Kindle author? Would you like to be interviewed for this blog? You can! See details on my [Kindle Authors Wanted](#) page.

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