

Q&A for God's House by John Trudel

Books-and-Authors.net: Where did you grow up and was reading and writing a part of your life? Who were your earliest influences and why?

The old East Coast, NJ, and with roots on both sides of my family that go all the way back to Valley Forge and the Battle of Trenton.

Reading, yes. Old magazines from WW II first, and, later, YA novels about airplanes and dogs.

Writing, not so much. Not until later when I had to write professionally.

My formative years were spent hanging out at a small airport, washing airplanes, doing odd jobs, learning to fly, and listening to the tales of an eclectic group of pilots and adventurers.

"Ike" Schlossbach, who owned the airport, had one eye, had been at both Poles, commanded a submarine in World War I, and commanded the first aero squadron to serve on the first Aircraft Carrier. Ike was the first Jewish midshipman at Annapolis, and graduated from my High School.

Mr. Davidson, my HS history teacher, roamed the world and personally experienced the horrific history of the early 20th century. His stories were more interesting than textbooks. My 8th grade teacher, Mr. Ward, had served in the 82nd Airborne from Normandy on into Germany. He and his dad gave me my first airplane ride.

Books-and-Authors.net: Discuss your new book God's House.

My first novel is doing well. It's available everywhere, and in all eBook formats. I especially appreciate the kind comments from well-published authors in other genres.

Books-and-Authors.net: One reviewer has said, "— John Trudel has captured the language, procedures, and frustrations of people working in the Intelligence Community perfectly." What research went into writing God's House? Explain the title as it relates to the plot.

That was Robb Kresge, retired CIA. Robb was a cofounder of the counterterrorism division. He was on the duty desk when 9-11 went down.

In a way, you could say that my whole life was research for my novels. As a young engineer, I worked all over the world. I was exposed to interesting people and exciting technology at the peak of "the American Century." I've been fortunate, and this helps my novels.

Robert Heinlein said his characters wrote the book, he didn't. That's how I write my novels too. I take edgy technologies, odd situations, and exceptional people, sit in a room, and talk with my imaginary friends. I also do a lot of research and read widely, especially in my genre.

Writing high concept Thrillers is hard work, but a lot of fun. I do extensive research to get the details right. I have clusters of critical reviewers, personal friends who help me. Some of my lists are content experts, like “gun geeks,” MDs, former SPEC OPS, “agency” people, etc.

God’s House is depicted on the cover. It’s a Megachurch that is not as it seems. Evil is so often cloaked as doing good. Even ministers and altruistic organizations can give in to the dark side.

Books-and-Authors.net: Who is Jack Donner?

Jack’s a good man, with honor and integrity. He’s a talented technical professional. He serves his country as a civilian troubleshooter, but makes the mistake of caring too much.

Jack’s alter ego is John Black. That’s his cover name, his dark side. John Black leaves no footprints in the sand. He lives in the deep black of midnight.

Books-and-Authors.net: God's House is described as "A New Type of Thriller," Explain.

This is a better question for my readers and reviewers to answer. I’ve been published for years, so I didn’t need the prestige and money that – in legend – surrounds successful novelists. I seek something new that my readers enjoy. I want to give them surprises, make them think, and get them to read my books twice and recommend them to friends.

Perhaps the best answer to your question is in the “blurbs” from successful novelists found in the front of God’s House and on the cover. I’m particularly gratified that each found something compelling about my book, and, for the most part, each found something different.

Don Bendell compared it favorably to several best sellers. Margaret Coel liked my "tough, big-hearted" hero, Jack Donner. Conversely, Roger Croft, who writes dark spy novels, keyed on Jack's "cynicism and hardened experience." Chuck Moody, who taught the classics for 30 years, liked my symbolism and mythology of good versus evil. Chuck liked the fact that my character Jack fought evil without becoming evil himself. He's right: Hard to do, and hard to write.

These days, evil and corruption seems to be winning. We're at a time when many in the West seem to have forgotten evil exists, along with the values that helped us to prevail against the odds in the past.

I was energized by Chuck's viewpoint. He read *God's House* and not just understood, but resonated with my hero, Jack Donner. This is what we novelists dream about. It doesn't get any better than that.

Books-and-Authors.net: If Hollywood called and asked you to cast God’s House, Who would you cast and why?

I don’t think that’s my call, though I plan to ask my readers for opinions when we get a contract.

I'd ask Hollywood to send me travel money to come and meet with the Director. I'd want to know if he/she had a vision of what they wanted to do, and then we'd discuss it. All the movie stories I've heard personally from successful authors, were, ah, unique....

Tony Hillerman said his contribution to the movies was to take the check, remove it from the envelope, and deposit it in the bank. Jean Auel's Hollywood experience was so bad that she won't license her books. David Morrell had one of the most successful franchises in history for his Rambo character, but the movies were nothing like his novel, *First Blood*.

Then there's Craig Johnson, who got productively involved in every detail of the screenplays, casting, and production for the movies based on his novels. I guess you never know.

Books-and-Authors.net: What should readers learn from reading God's House?

There's a lot of edgy science and real history in my novels. My settings feature real locations, and exceptional people trying to survive long enough to solve big problems and save the world.

The reality is that we are becoming a dumbed-down society. Many voice concerns about how poorly students do in the STEM subjects: the Science, Technology, English, and Math that drives prosperity. We test even worse in history, geography, and our own Constitution.

If my novels help any of these areas, even in small ways – and some say they do -- I'd like that.

James Patterson once said, "At their best, Thrillers use scrupulous research and accurate details in which meaningful characters teach us about our world. When readers finish a Thriller, they should feel not just emotionally satisfied, but also better informed – and hungry for the next riveting tale." This is what I strive for.

Books-and-Authors.net: What are readers saying about God's House?

They say it's realistic, an enjoyable read, and it makes them think. I love the comments, mostly from women, who say they don't normally read Thrillers, but liked mine and told their friends about it.

Books-and-Authors.net: What do you hope to achieve with God's House?

I now have five (5) Thrillers written and agented. I hope this is the start of something big.

Books-and-Authors.net: What was the last book you read?

Senator's Inhofe's epic work, *[The Greatest Hoax](#)*, a story of how politics (massive amounts of public money, propaganda, and media control) have corrupted Climate Science to allow totalitarian control of energy and our lives.

The use of politicized science to advance radical political agendas has happened before, and with horrific results. In the 1930s, Hitler used eugenics and Stalin used false agriculture.

Interestingly, Dr. Michael Crichton raised these very issues in his 2004 novel, [*State of Fear*](#). Crichton said he lost friends in Hollywood for his novel. He even got death threats!

Crichton has now been vindicated. In 50 years, this might be seen as his best work.

Books-and-Authors.net: What's next?

This one's easy. *Privacy Wars*, my next novel, will be out this summer. Cyber-privacy is a hot topic, so the timing should be good.

And, next year, we'll have *Soft Target*.