



The 7 Question Interview with David Oppegaard

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David Oppegaard wrote his first book at the age of fifteen, a 400-page science fiction novel. Since then, he has written several more novels, some published, most not, and is currently working on his 9th novel. David holds a B.A. in English Literature from St. Olaf College and an M.F.A. in Writing from Hamline University. A finalist for the Indiana Review Fiction Award and the Iowa Fiction Award, David was the author of the Bram Stoker nominated *The Suicide Collectors* (St. Martin's Press). His second novel, *Wormwood, Nevada* will be released in December of 2009, also from St. Martin's Press. Some of his novels are:

- *Wormwood, Nevada*
- *The Suicide Collectors*

His official website can be accessed here: <http://www.davidoppegaard.com>

The WritingRaw.com 7 Question Interview

Please let us know who you are and how we might know you:

My name is David Oppegaard and I am the author of *The Suicide Collectors* and *Wormwood, Nevada*. *The Suicide Collectors* is set in a post-apocalyptic near future where ninety percent of Earth's population has been destroyed by a suicide plague called the Despair. The novel follows a man named Norman as he travels across a devastated North America in search of a cure. *The Suicide Collectors* received a Bram Stoker nomination, a starred review from *Publisher's Weekly*, and was named an Indie Next notable book.

Any news you would like to share concerning upcoming projects:

My follow up novel *Wormwood, Nevada* will be released on December 8th, 2009. It's set in a small town in central Nevada where a meteorite lands and wreaks all kinds of havoc. It's a meditation on love and loneliness with a healthy amount of sci-fi action thrown into the mix.



Thoughts concerning the current state of the literary world:

It mirrors the real world, doesn't it? Not exactly thriving, vaguely apocalyptic, but still worth existing within and trying to save.

Who is your favorite author and why?

Of course, this is an inherently evil question, because it is so hard to pick one favorite. I'll go with Fyodor Dostoevsky because it's hard to beat *Crime & Punishment*, *The Brothers Karamazov*, *The Idiot*, and *Notes From Underground*. Just looking at that list of titles makes me shiver.

Have you written a book you love that you have not been able to publish?

So many! I'm currently about to finish the rough draft of my ninth novel. Hopefully eight and nine will find publishers, but we've left a couple behind that I still hold out hope for. My fourth novel *Knocking Over the Fishbowl* was a Top 100 finalist in the Amazon Breakthrough Award, but I fear it wasn't formulaic enough to make it to publication. It's a comedic novel about Wilson Scraggs, a Vietnam vet who escapes from a mental institution and finds a curious kind of sanctuary in a suburb called Hungry Hollow. The publishing world is a strange beast. On one hand, most of the stuff that gets published is pretty formulaic and thus certain to make the publisher decent money. But on the other hand, stuff that's not formulaic and stands out in its own crazy way will probably fail, but it at least stands an outside chance of rocketing to the top of bestseller lists and leaving the formulaic stuff in the dust. I guess editors must think to themselves on a constant basis, "Do I feel lucky today?"

Do you have anything specific that you want to say to your readers?

Thank you for reading! I feel so honored to be able to write novels for a living. Books rock! You might not always agree with the narrative choices I make, but I want you to know I never take them lightly and practically drive myself insane over every detail. I also pledge to stay weird, in hopes that I never write the same book twice. With each project, I strive to not only write something unique, but to write something that makes me just a little uncomfortable.



How do you feel about what WritingRaw.com and other literary sharing sites are attempting to do for new writers?

I think new writers need all the help and exposure we can get. Publishing your first couple of works is like being dropped in a pool of sharks after you've been dipped in sheep's blood. Thank you, WritingRaw!

WritingRaw.com would like to thank David Oppegaard for taking the time out of his busy schedule for this interview.