

# Interview: John A. Daly, Author of Broken Slate

*Editor's Note: Hope you enjoy this interview I did with our own John Daly, who is not only a thoughtful political columnist but also a novelist, who has just written another page-turner. Take a look, and if you're into thrillers, click on the link at the end of this interview and buy his book.*

*Thanks. –Bernie Goldberg*

**Q: I've noticed that your new thriller has generated a lot of buzz. Fox News's Dana Perino and James Rosen have both given it strong praise. What's the book about?**

**A:** Thanks, Bernie. **Broken Slate** is the third book in the Sean Coleman Thriller series, and its story ties back to much of what readers learned about Sean in the first two novels. He's not your standard protagonist. He's a deeply flawed individual, with an often abrasive attitude, who has struggled with alcoholism and abandonment. His father deserted his family in a rural mountain town in Colorado when Sean was just a child, and that loss shaped the person that Sean went on to become.

**Q: Why did Sean's father leave?**

**A:** That's been a mystery. Sean's mother was always tight-lipped about what had happened, and a stroke she suffered later in life kept the truth from ever coming out. In *Broken Slate*, Sean finally receives word – after 30 years – that his father has reemerged, on the other side of the country...but as a murder victim. The story follows Sean as he tries to piece together the past, fill in three decades of missing blanks, and get to the bottom of his father's murder.



Thriller author,  
John A. Daly

**Q: Interesting. How has the series been received as a whole?**

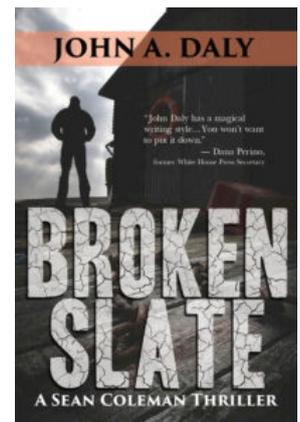
**A:** Quite well, actually. The reviews have been strong, and my previous book, *Blood Trade*, was my publisher's top seller of 2015. It wasn't even released until September of that year, so the success surprised a lot of people, including me. It renewed interest in the first book, *From a Dead Sleep*, and helped build a decent-sized fan base for the Sean Coleman thrillers. I couldn't be happier that readers have connected with the stories and especially the characters.

**Q: Is Sean Coleman the only recurring character in the series?**

**A:** No, not at all. In fact, Sean's brother-in-law, Gary Lumbergh, is a central character as well. He's the police chief in the town they both live in. The two are polar opposites – physically, culturally (Lumbergh's from Chicago), and ideologically. They regularly butt heads, but manage to find common ground as the series evolves. Other recurring characters include a 13-year-old autistic boy who idolizes Sean (much to his mother's dismay), and Ron Oldhorse, a Native American survivalist who lives in the hills outside of town. He's a favorite of readers.

**Q: You do a lot of political writing for this website and others, including *National Review*. How political are your novels?**

**A:** They're not political at all. A lot of people find that odd, being that I've made a bit of a name for myself in the political arena, but the truth is that I was a fiction writer before I was ever a political writer. I like to keep those interests separate. Some people let politics enter every part of their lives, and that's not healthy. It's good to compartmentalize.



Broken Slate,  
by John A.  
Daly

**Q:** Do you think you'll someday write a political novel – maybe about a president who gets into trouble for some of the things he says or does?

**A:** Hmm. I feel like that story has already been done. No, if I ever decide to write a political book, it will be a nonfiction one. I'm not sure I could come up with a political work of fiction that could provide more unexpected twists than what we've seen in real-life over the past couple of years.

**Q:** A lot of people start out as liberals in their younger years and move right later on. What about you?

**A:** Actually, as a teenager and into my twenties, I was pretty apolitical. My parents were social conservatives as I was growing up, but they rarely voiced strong political convictions, so I was never pulled in any particular

direction. In college, my professors wore their liberal ideology on their sleeves, as did many students. I found the displays more humorous than anything. I rarely participated in political discussions (in or out of the classroom), because politics just didn't interest me. It wasn't until my first big, career-related paycheck that I put any real thought into how the government spends our money; the size of Uncle Sam's cut blew me away. Likewise, I didn't think much about geopolitics and foreign policy until 9/11. My political leanings really didn't start to take serious shape until I was in my mid-to-late twenties.

**Q: Leftists can't go two minutes without uttering the word "impeachment." Do you see that as anything beyond a remote possibility – and do you think Donald Trump will last four years in office?**

**A:** I have a hard time believing that President Trump will ever face impeachment. It will assuredly remain a topic of liberal interest throughout the Trump presidency, but unless a bombshell comes out of the Russia investigation, or something of comparable magnitude unfolds, I think he'll remain impeachment-free. As to whether or not he'll last four years, I assume he will. Though, with Trump, things are never as certain as they should be. Throughout the campaign, it always seemed to me as though he was more interested in proving that he *could* win the presidency than he was in actually serving as president. I suspect he was as surprised as most of us were that he won, and his transition from a celebrity-businessman to the 'leader of the free world' has been a painful one. Maybe he'll decide at some point that he's sick of it, and find a way out, but I doubt it.

**Q: Does being a political writer help or hurt your marketability as a novelist?**

**A:** Both. Being open about my conservative leanings has cost me a few opportunities that I'm aware of, and probably some that

I'm not aware of. On the other hand, I know that my commentary has compelled political readers – who probably wouldn't have otherwise known about my books – to give them a look.

**Q: What writers are you a fan of?**

**A:** On the fiction side, I'm a big fan of Cormac McCarthy. *The Road* is one of my favorite books. Also, Tim Green's thriller novels from the early 2000s were what drew me into the fiction-genre I now write in. On the political side, I really enjoy the work of Jonah Goldberg, Kevin Williamson, and David French at *National Review*. I also like Ben Shapiro and Guy Benson. That Bernie Goldberg guy is pretty good too.

**Q: In your political columns, you've taken more than a few media-conservatives to task for their hypocrisy and irresponsible rhetoric in the era of Trump. Have you ever heard from any of them?**

**A:** A few, yes. Some of them don't like me very much. One individual, who I touched on in a column, emailed me mere minutes after the piece was published, to call me a back-stabber (one of the nicer terms he used) who was aiding *the leftists*. I've received similar gripes, including from some pretty well-known individuals. I've never met any of these people, but because I'm a conservative, I'm apparently supposed to have their backs, and also President Trump's back. That's not for me. I just write what I believe. I'm not interested in being part of some partisan alliance.

**Q: What would readers of your work probably *not* know about you?**

**A:** It would probably be my collecting tendencies. I'm a big fan of Belgian artist, Laurent Durieux. Several of his prints decorate the walls of my home. I also got back into vinyl records a few years ago, right before they made a retro-cultural comeback. I like checking out local used-record shops whenever I'm traveling or on vacation, and I've found

some pretty cool stuff – everything from classic rock and R&B to old sci-fi movie soundtracks. It's a fun and affordable, midlife-crisis hobby.

**Thanks, John. *For those interested in ordering Broken Slate, or any of the Sean Coleman thrillers, you can get them on Amazon here.***