



By Joe Byerly

This is the final question, in a five question interview with author [Robert Greene](#).

Joe: Because of writing, I've had the opportunity to interact with academics and those with advanced degrees and it can be a bit intimidating. You don't have PhD. You only have a bachelors in classical studies from UC Berkeley, yet you've written several books on some very weighty topics. How has writing contributed to your self-education?

Robert: Since I started writing these books, my education has gone up to a whole different level. On one hand when I give myself a task to write a book, I want to understand it very

deeply so I'm not just spouting bullshit. I read all the books I can get my hands on, and in the process I learn a lot about the subject.

I don't come to the subject with a closed mind; I come to it with a very open one. I want to learn. I want to see what I don't know and I want to discover things. By now, I've gone through six books and the process six times. I've read thousands of books to write six. So my knowledge level has increased.

On the other hand, knowledge has to have a practical aspect. I'm not into gaining a lot of useless abstract knowledge. I want to learn things I can apply to my life because I'm a practical person.

Since the books have come out, I've done speaking engagements, consultant work, and served on the board for a publicly traded company. I've had to learn to see my books in real life; to see how the power game operates in the boardroom in large corporations.

Writing, along with my interaction with the public, has provided me with an incredible education. I've met business leaders, political leaders, athletes, and military leaders.

To your point about people with advanced degrees, I would never be intimidated by people with fancy degrees. Sometimes they are the people who are blinded by their knowledge. They think they know everything. Through universities, they've absorbed particular ways of thinking that can be very constricting. My books don't fit into the academic category because they are kind of free floating. I address the reader directly, I give advice and then I talk about history.

The most interesting and successful people I've found are not necessarily people who have degrees from Harvard or Yale.

Read the entire interview:

- [Why Military Leaders Should Study Human Nature](#)
- [Our Dark Side and the Need for Self-Awareness](#)
- [The Benefits of Being a Mentor](#)
- [Leaders Worth Studying: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly](#)

Robert Greene is the author of The New York Times Best Sellers [48 Laws of Power](#), [the Art of Seduction](#), [The 33 Strategies for War](#), and [Mastery](#). He also coauthored [The 50th Law](#) with rapper 50 Cent.

In his latest book [The Laws of Human Nature](#) he examines people's drives and motivations. Drawing from ideas and examples of Pericles, Queen Elizabeth I, Martin Luther King Jr, and many others, Greene teaches us how to detach ourselves from our own emotions and master self-control.

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