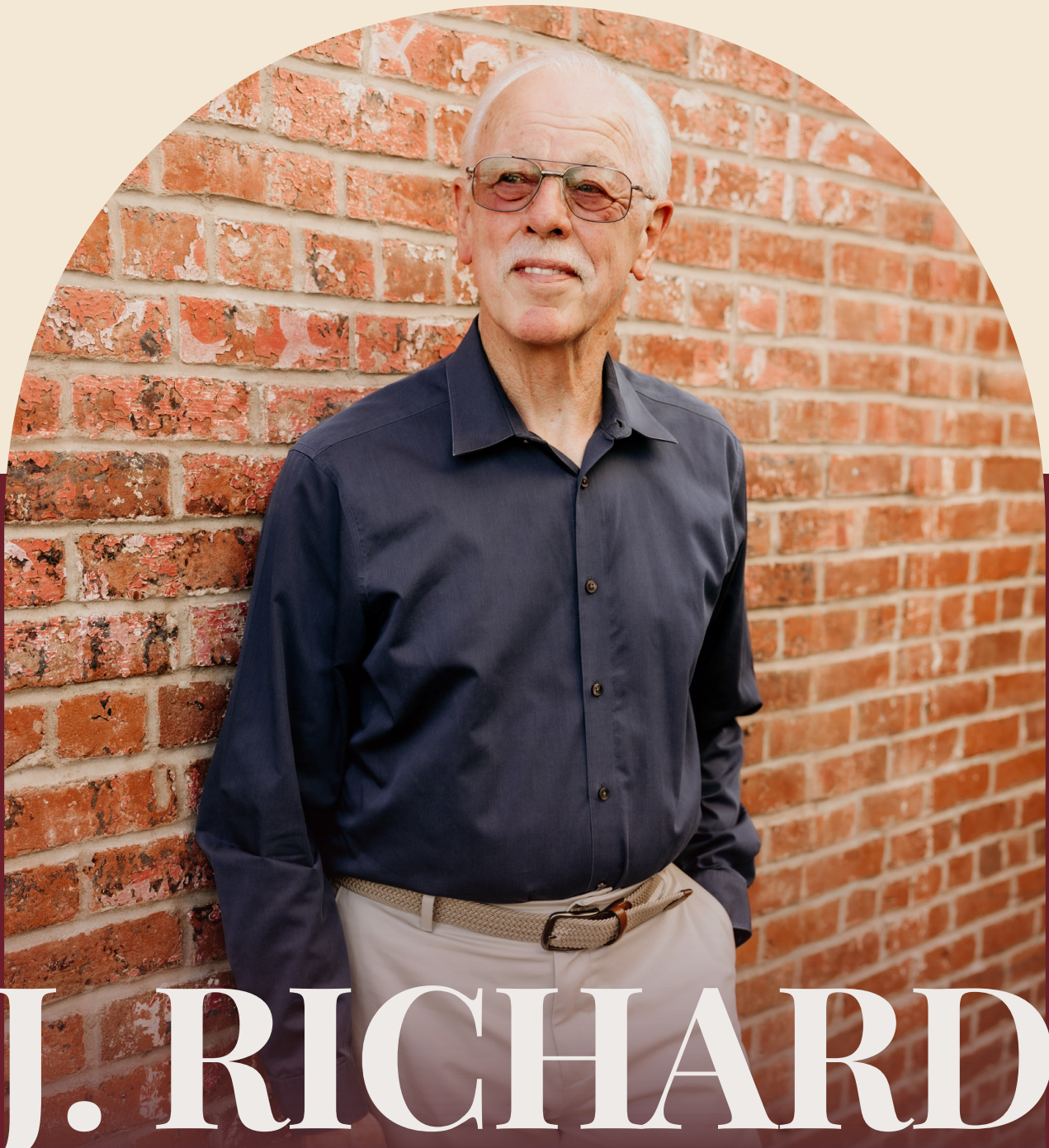




J. RICHARD JOHNSON

Author • PhD Sociologist • Storyteller

It is gripping, it is human, and it is overdue.

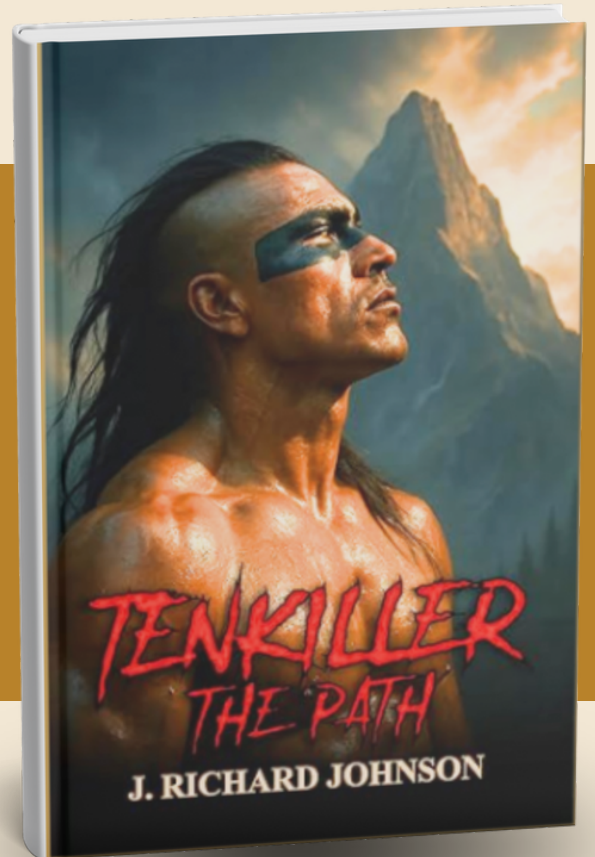
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TENKILLER: THE PATH

Tennessee, 1835. A young Cherokee boy watches his world begin to fracture under the weight of forces far larger than himself. What follows is not simply a story of survival — it is the account of a man forged by violence, shaped by love, driven by a thirst for justice, and ultimately called to something greater than revenge.

Tenkiller: The Path traces Johnny Tenkiller's journey across three decades and an American continent — from the Cherokee homelands of the Southeast to the frontier, through the raw complexity of race and identity in pre-Civil War America, and finally west toward California. Along the way he encounters a freed Black man building dignity in a nation that refuses to see him, a warrior uncle who carries centuries of Cherokee knowledge, and the quiet wisdom of those who understand that a man's path is not always of his own choosing.

Grounded in rigorous historical research and written with deep respect for the people and periods it depicts, this is historical fiction that does not flinch from the truth — and does not mistake vengeance for justice.



THEMES

- Cherokee identity and the era of Indian Removal
- Revenge, justice, and what lies beyond both
- Race, resilience, and survival in pre-Civil War America
- Faith, family, and the inheritance of culture
- A man's search for purpose across an American continent

KEY DETAILS

GENRE	Historical Fiction
SETTING	1820s–1850s, Eastern Tennessee through California
AVAILABLE	Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and major online retailers
BULK ORDERS	Contact info@mysticquerozepublishing.com



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

J. Richard Johnson is a PhD sociologist, management consultant, statistical engineer, and longtime college professor whose career has spanned decades of research, teaching, and applied work at the intersection of data, human behavior, and organizational strategy.

He developed a passionate interest in Native American history at age ten and maintained it throughout his life, thanks to his mother, a Cherokee mixed-blood, who was born in a Chickasaw hospital in Tishomingo, Oklahoma. Her dad, who claimed to be half Cherokee and looked the part, had been working as a mechanic in Chickasaw territory at the time. She transmitted what little she knew of Cherokee culture to Johnson, mostly unintentionally, as he grew up.

It was enough to make him curious, but that curiosity, and decades of research, hardened into something closer to outrage. He dreamed of writing a book that would show a different picture of Native Americans from what he had read about in high school textbooks or saw in cowboy-and-Indian movies made in the '50s and '60s.

He dreamed about correcting this warped vision of our history, some way, somehow, and someday.

Tenkiller: The Path is the result of that dream.



What Readers Are Saying

Tenkiller: The Path is the story American history buried and Hollywood replaced with a lie.

“Like L’Amour, he forces the reader to reflect on some of their own internal beliefs. Like L’Amour, he leaves you yearning for more.”

— PATRICK COONS

“Dr. Johnson’s meticulously crafted historical backdrop is adorned with remarkable subtle details that transport you every time you open the pages. It is a true literary masterpiece.”

— DALI

“It blends the themes of spirituality, religion, history, white, Indian, and African American cultures in an approachable, understandable way. J. Richard Johnson has written a great novel. I thoroughly enjoyed it and recommend it wholeheartedly.”

— S.D. KLEIN

“A sometimes violent tale with moments of exquisite beauty woven into the tapestry. The supporting cast of characters represent a diverse picture of our American culture.”

— BRUCE

“Like L’Amour, he forces the reader to reflect on some of their own internal beliefs. Like L’Amour, he leaves you yearning for more.”

— KURT FAITZ

“Tenkiller deftly reflects the changing nature of social, economic, and cultural relations in America during this era. A fun and fulfilling read.”

— KAREN LINKLETTER



For interviewers

Suggested Interview Questions



ABOUT THE WRITING PROCESS

- You spent thirty years carrying this story before you finally sat down to write it. What made you take the sabbatical and do it?
- Your mother was a Cherokee mixed-blood born in a Chickasaw hospital in Oklahoma. What did she pass on to you about Cherokee culture, and how did that shape the book?
- You've described the cowboy-and-Indian films you grew up watching as a wholesale fabrication of history. What specifically did Hollywood get wrong about the Cherokee people?

HISTORICAL RESEARCH

- Johnny Tenkiller is a mixed-race protagonist navigating two worlds. How much of that internal conflict between identity and belonging drew from your own experience?
- You spent decades as a PhD sociologist, management consultant, and college professor before writing a novel. How did that background shape the way you built this story?
- The book is dedicated to actor Wes Studi. What does his work mean to you as someone who spent years frustrated by Hollywood's portrayal of Native Americans?

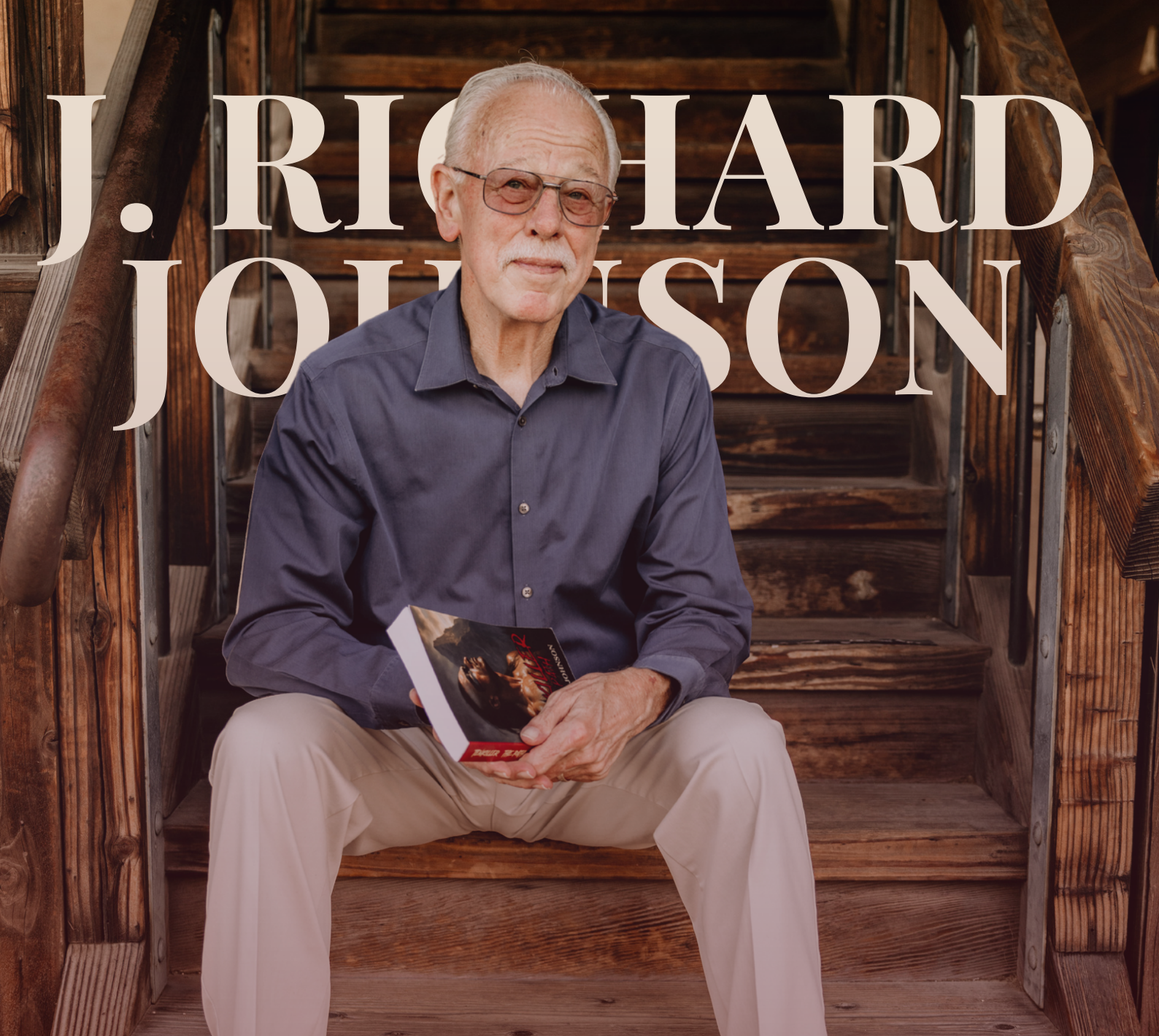
CHEROKEE REPRESENTATION

- Isaac McDermott — the freed Black man in the story — is one of the most fully rendered characters in the book. How did you approach writing that character with authenticity and dignity?
- The story covers the Trail of Tears era but from the inside — through the eyes of someone living it rather than looking back at it. What responsibility did you feel in depicting that history accurately?

PERSONAL JOURNEY

- You've said that your path chooses you, not the other way around. What does that mean to you personally, and what does it mean in the context of writing this book?
- What do you hope a reader carries with them after finishing Tenkiller: The Path?

J. RICHARD JOHNSON

A photograph of J. Richard Johnson, an older man with white hair and glasses, wearing a blue button-down shirt and light-colored trousers. He is sitting on a set of wooden stairs, holding a book titled "The Heart of the Matter" by J.R. Johnson. The background is a rustic wooden structure.

Let's tell better stories.

CONNECT WITH J. RICHARD JOHNSON

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