

Books to Inspire Research & Writing

Inspiring reads selected by Jonathan Knight, author and Communications Coordinator at Franklin University



A lifelong follower of Cleveland athletics, Jonathan Knight

has become one of the leading authorities on Cleveland sports history.

The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Mayhem at the Fair That Changed America by Erik Larson

A stunning real-life thriller that served as a game-changer for historical nonfiction, combining the incredible backstory of Chicago's 1893 World's Fair and the chilling atrocities of serial killer H.H. Holmes just a few miles away.

Crooked River Burning by Mark Winegardner

An epic yet underrated novel by a wonderful writer combining fictional and real-life characters in Cleveland between 1948 and 1969 as the city rose to national prominence and then fell to disgrace.

Summer of '49 by David Halberstam

The quintessential baseball book by one of the best writers of our time, examining the thrilling 1949 pennant race highlighted by some of the most iconic characters in the history of the game.

Death of a Salesman by Arthur Miller

Technically a play, this is still perhaps the most significant piece of American fiction of the 20th century - even today it reflects all that is good and bad about our culture.

Blood on the Moon: The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln by Edward J. Steers, Jr.

Of the many books examining one of the most tragic and mysterious events in American history, this is the finest and most comprehensive.

Eight Men Out: The Black Sox and the 1919 World Series by Eliot Asinof

Perhaps the first piece of genuine literature written about sport, investigating the many threads that wove together to form sport's most infamous scandal - so vivid it reads like fiction.

The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay by Michael Chabon

Technically a sweeping novel, but feels like nonfiction. Tells the winding saga of two Jewish teenagers who create a superhero and launch the comic book industry, along the way not only witnessing America, but actually becoming America.

